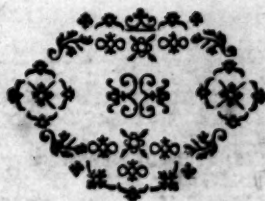


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THE
NICE LADY:

A
COMEDY.



L O N D O N;

Printed by J. MEDLEY, near the *Chapter-House*,
in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*; and sold by, all the
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DEDICATION.

To Henry Lumley, *Esq;*

S I R,

AS the only Man of unallay'd Goodness within the Circle of my Acquaintance, I presume to consecrate to you, this favourite Trifle of mine. Not doubting but the Owner of so much exalted Wisdom, unparallel'd Affability, extensive Generosity and peerless Charity, will overlook with his customary Indulgence, this unadvised and unlicensed Act.

Far different from the Views of common Dedicators, I present — not with a Hope and Expectation of being paid for my Presumption; but having a Breast glowing with honest Gratitude, I only seek this Way, to repay the many Obligations I stand largely indebted to your Kindness and Good-Nature; and which, I cannot satisfy in any other Manner.

As you have not the least Tincture of Pride in your Constitution, and hate Flattery above all Things, I should illy make my Court to you, by attempting to please with the Arts of Adulation. It is something fortunate for me, that your Merits are universally known; for otherwise, I might be accused of the Crime I seem to decry; and should not be believed, when I tell the World — that with 2000 l. a Year, you have done more good than *Titus* ever did with the Wealth of the whole *Roman* Empire, tho' he was stiled *the Delight of human Kind*, I am, SIR, the Admirer of your Virtues,

As well as your very humble Servant,

G. S. GREEN.

THE

P R E F A C E.

A PLAY printed — without being first acted, carrying Marks of its Unworthiness in the Title Page, the Author of this, thinks himself indispensably obliged to say something of the following Publication.

The Writing of a Comedy is not the Gift of every One; and is generally confessed to be no easy Task; especially at a Time when every Subject for Satire is said to be exhausted, or worn Threadbare. Whether the Author of this Comedy had a Share of Genius sufficient for such an Accomplishment, remains doubtful; but he was constantly made to *think* so, by those that had much themselves, and shine in the first Class of Writers at this Time,

Every competent Judge, that did the Author the Honour of Reading his Work in M. S. seemed to approve of it very much; and made him many Compliments thereon: But no Friend was found, to lift it to the Stage; nor Patron——willing to recommend it to those who Manage our Theatres: Tho' new Comedies had been long called for, by the Public, and even by Mr. G. himself; who said in Company, *That he would give a Thousand Guineas for such a Performance, if he liked it.* This, being imparted to the Author hereof, about six Years ago, he was resolved to put in for the Palm; and having written half the first Act, about ten
Years

The P R E F A C E.

Years before that, he went to Work for the Prize, and in six Weeks Time compleated the Fabric, as it now stands; with Prologue and Epilogue to embellish both Fronts. Thus finished — it was handed to Mr. G. for his *liking*: But a *Thousand Guineas* being a weighty Sum, and what most Folks would *like* much more than a M. S. of one Quire of Paper, no Favour was found, nor Prize to be obtained. *He did not like it.*

But as every Thing is *liked* by somebody — after lying by, for five Years, this Mushroom of *Parnassus*, found a few sprightly Friends, renowned for little more than Birth, Genius, Wit and Learning within the College Confines of *Oriel, C. Church, Corpus, Magdalen, B. Nose, and Baliol*; who generously undertook a Subscription to defray the Expence of Printing the same, that the World might have an Opportunity of Judging, whether it deserved the Disregard it found.

As to the Work itself — it is built on an entire new Plan; and has in *bran* new Characters, lashed the Follies and Foibles *untouched* before. And if the Perfection of Comedy, according to *Dryden, Otway*, and such Sort of Folks, consists in a just Picture of Nature, the Author hopes he has some Pretensions to rest uncensured, tho' not applauded.

As a Reason may be expected to be given by *some* Readers, why this Comedy could not be *played* upon other Terms than those premised; this general Answer may suffice — The Managers of our Theatres (the same being but two, for the whole Kingdom) have no Occasion to go to the Charge of new Plays, when they can fill their Houses with old ones, every Night: People rushing in, as soon as the Doors are open, at the Hazard of their Lives and Limbs.

When

When *London* was not half so big as it is now, Mr. *Dodley* tells us, there were † seventeen Play-houses in and about it; besides other Companies who were retained by Noblemen, &c. Is it not then great Pity, the Number should now be restrained to *two*? The Audience could then *sit* comfortably, and not be crushed and incommoded, and forced to *stand*, as they do now.

Were there any Thing in Plays, dangerous to Government, or hurtful to Society, even *one* Play-house would be too much; but as they are allowed by the Noble, the Learned, the Beautiful and Wise, to be the most rational Entertainments in Nature, and frequented by Crowned Heads; and the Reduction of Playhouses being well known to be made only to serve a particular Turn, and crush the late *H. Fielding*, Esq; who had taken some Liberties with the Character of the prime Minister of that Time; it is very surprizing that nobody attempts the Repeal of a Law so opposite to Reason, and the just Sense of the whole Legislature.

As there are Abundance of Strangers flocking to *London* daily, and great Numbers of young People growing up, who have neither of them ever seen our old Plays—which are new to them, and please generally by Reputation only, the Managers are enabled to fill their Houses with such antiquated Entertainments, tho' many of them are out of Character, abound with Absurdities, and swell with Fustian; to the Prejudice of other People, who have seen the same perhaps, twenty Times over.

G. S. GREEN.

T H E

† Preface to *Dodley's* old Plays.



PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mr. ALLWIT.

WHILST fierce *Bellona*, with her hostile Train,
Triumphant rides upon the liquid Main,
And distant Regions feel the warm Alarms
Of Martial Fury and destructive Harms ;
Britain —— by Nature, sever'd from her Foes,
Enjoys an undisturb'd and calm Repose ;
Her warlike Sons like Lions in the Way,
Keep all her bulky Enemies at Bay :
So safely guarded that we scarcely know
We've any Armies, any Wars or Foe.
O happy Land ! and *London*, doubly blest'd,
By being the Soul and Centre of the rest.
London, —— the Glory of the blissful Isle,
By Situation safe —— may sing and smile !
The peaceful Palm o'er shades its graceful Head,
And Heav'n's Protection in its Rays are read.

Felicitated

P R O L O G U E.

Felicitated thus — the Muse invites
To softer Scenes and innocent Delights.

LADIES — to you — the Soul of our Success,
We beg Permission for the first Address:

Your kindly Influence like th' enliv'ning Sun,
Gives Life to all Things that it smiles upon:
Our Fate, Salvation, Food and Raiment too,
And e'en Damnation, must depend on you:

Then deign to take us into Patronage,
And we'll reform the Errors of the Stage,
And strive to mend the Morals of the Age. }

Licentious Sayings shall be banish'd hence;
Nay — even *Wis!* before we'll give Offence;

The chafest Matron and the purest Maid,
To grace our Benches need not be afraid:

The Prude without a Fan may sit secure,
And keep her *Phys* unruffled and demure;

The Sisterhood of *Grace* — the *Lambs* of *Low*,
Friend *Ruth* and *Rachel* — *crowded in above*,
Shall nothing find but what they may approve. }

[Pointing to the Galleries,

To Night — we shall with Love and Humour treat }

[you;

A Beau — [*bowing*] your humble Servant — comes to }

[greet you,

And one great *Goblin* — ready for to eat you;

But as the *Lion* will not hurt a *Maid*,

The Spotless *Virgin* need not be afraid;

He'll

PROLOGUE.

He'll only fasten on the brittle Few
Whose *China Jars* were frail, and fell in two;
Who — if they fear the Fury of his Paw,
Had better, e'er the Play begins, withdraw.
The other Characters — are Fools and Wits,
Good Housewives, Rusticks, Arrant-Sluts and Cits:
Which — our poor Author jumbles to a Jelly,
To please your Taste, and fill his own lank Belly.
Encourage his Attempt — and he'll essay
Next Time to please you a politier Way.

Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

LADY NICE, A Widow of 3000l. a Year; much famed
for good Housewifry and Neatness.

Mrs. SUBTLE, A Lady of small Fortune, kept by
LADY NICE for a Companion.

Sir WILLIAM TRAFFICK, A City Knight
and Merchant.

Mr. ALLWIT, A Beau, a great Pretender to Wit.

Mr. SUMWELL, A Person of Fortune, that acted as
Steward for **LADY NICE**.

Mr. WORTHY, His Nephew.

Mr. JOHNSON, Parson of the Parish.

DUNGWELL, A Farmer; Tenant to **LADY NICE**.

MARGERY and **AILCE**, His Wife and Daughter.

CARTROPE, Another Tenant.

CARROT and **DORCAS**, His Wife and Daughter.

HANNAH, **SARAH**, **MARY** and **MARGARET**,
Maids to **LADY NICE**.

BUTLER, **COACHMAN**, **FOOTMAN**, **BOY**,
and **COOK-MAID**.

TWO GENTLEMEN.

SCENE, LINCOLNSHIRE.

TIME — answerable to the Time of the Representa-
tion: But with more Probability, the better
Part of a Day.



THE
NICE LADY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Lady NICE's House.

Enter the BUTLER, COACHMAN, FOOTMAN and BOY; HANNAH, SARAH, MARY and the COOK, with Bundles.

COOK.

O, Francis, Are you to be turned away too?

S
But. Yes, Mrs. Cook, and every Servant in the House I believe. We are ordered into this Room to receive our Wages and Dismission, immediately.

Cook. Pray—who are to come in our Rooms?

But. That's a Question not easily answered. My Lady and her Confidante have some Contention about it. Mrs. Subtle would surround her with Creatures of her Acquaintance, whilst my Lady pleads hard for some of her Tenants, the Farmer's Sons and Daughters that were born and bred upon her Estate,

Cook,

The NICE LADY.

Cook. O, they'll make her fine Servants, indeed! since I—that have been Cook to so many Families of Distinction a'n't cleanly enough for her Ladyship.

But. She says, We all conspire to poison her with Nastiness; and that's the Reason we are none of us to stay.

Cook. Let her mend the Matter then by raking up her own Dunghills, if she will. I wou'dn't stay with her for Fifty Pounds a Year.

Coach. Nor I neither. I'd as soon hire myself to *Beelzebub*, and drive *Old Nick* about Hell, as be Coachman here.

Footm. And I'll go along with you Coachman, and ride behind, rather than be Footman here.

Boy. Do you think Mr. *Beelzebub* wants a Boy, Coachman? I'm weary of my Life with so much waiting and wiping, and rubbing and scrubbing, for ever and ever, and Amen.

Coach. Ai, *Harry*, never fear. We'll not leave you behind; nor the Maids neither.

Mary. Thank you for nothing. Perhaps we can find better Places ourselves.

Sarah. We ar'n't so weary of our Lives as to hire ourselves to the Devil neither. Are we Scullion?

Hannab. No, truly, that would be, *Out of the Frying-Pan into the Fire*. I have been used to hot Work in this World, it's true—But the Catechism says, We must renounce the Devil and all his Works.

Enter SUMWELL.

Sum. Are you all here? and all ready to go?

But. Yes, Sir, all ready to a Man.

Cook. Ai, and a Woman too.

Sum. Then I am ready. There's the Money due

The NICE LADY.

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to every one of you, to the utmost Halfpenny;
and a Month's Wages over. [Gives them Money,

But. We need not tell it, rolled up in Papers]
I suppose, it's all right.

Sum. You may do as you please. But it's right,
I'll assure you.

Enter Lady NICE and Mrs. SUBTLE.

Lady. What! Ar'n't these dirty Creatures gone
yet? pray, Mr. *Sumwell*, discharge them.

Sum. They are all discharged, Madam.

Lady. Why do they stay then?

But. To know and please your Ladyship, for
what Cause we are turned away, thus suddenly.

Lady. Cause! Mr. *Pert*. Is my Will and Plea-
sure to be disputed by my Quondam Servants?
Impudent Rascal! dirty Vermine! cause, indeed!
ha'n't I looked through the Sash and seen you wipe
Glasses with a dirty Napkin? and ha'n't I seen you
wipe the Sweat off your dirty Forehead with the same
Cloth you have wiped Plates, Knives, Spoons and
so forth? And don't you wait—like a nasty Tavern
Drawer with a Napkin under your filthy Arm to
wipe every thing with? Foh! a Napkin that
touches your nasty Coat! monstrous! a Coat that
that has lain on many a nasty Bed, and sometimes
on the Floor, and has been brushed with a nasty
Brush made of Hog's Bristles, that wallow in Mire!
and has brushed Hats, Stockens, and a thousand
nasty Things, O fie! I'm sick to think on't.
Can you form any Excuse to alleviate Faults like
these, pray?

But. If these are Faults, Madam, they are prac-
tised by some of the smartest Butlers in *England*.
Yes, and ten times worse. I have seen a Pocket-
Handkerchief supply the Place of a Napkin many
a Time, and ——

Lady.

Lady. Made use of it yourself. Get you out of my Sight, Poison, do! [*Exit Butler.*] Sure, Mrs. *Subtle*, I was born in an ill Hour, to be thus plagued with Nastiness. I wonder what dirty Deity was Lord of my Horoscope! you and I will live by ourselves and cook every thing, rather than be served at this irksome Rate. [*Sumwell talks in dumb shew with the Men.*]

Subtle. O, I shall find out a Cook for your Ladyship, some-where or other, that may be cleanly enough to cook for a Christian; but they are very scarce, that's certain. You know the Proverb.

Cook. I think, Mrs. *Subtle*, I have been thought capable of cooking for Christians before now. Pray what do you make of my Lord *Eatall* and my Lady *Fulbelly*? a'n't they Christians, pray? I have dressed them four and five Meals a Day for a Year together. But when Ladies come into the Kitchen and put the Cook out of Countenance, 'tis no Wonder she can't please.

Lady. Ha! Mrs. *Impertinence*! so coming into the Kitchen puts you out of Countenance, does it? Didn't I catch you dressing of Dinner in a nasty, filthy Apron, not fit to be seen? and didn't I see you wipe every thing with it? and didn't I see you make Paste on the same Board you had just been drawing a Goose on?

Cook. It was wip'd down with a Dishclout, first.

Lady. Finely wiped, indeed. Didn't I shew you the Blood upon it? nay, the very Dung, by *Jupiter*! and such Showers of Down Feathers flying about, that in short, I was just choaked: and yet--you're a Cook, forsooth.

Cook. These are Things so usual in all great Families, that I don't fear the Loss of a good Place by having this inserted in my Character.

Lady.

The NICE LADY.

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Lady. Confident Drazzle! If any one comes to me for your Character, I shall tell 'em of your laying down the Dripping-pan ten Days together without washing it, lest you should lose any Part of your fat Vails the Kitchen-Stuff; and that, you can baste the Meat with the stale Dripping, full of Cinders, and sell the Butter: That — you can take up your nasty Petticoats and tye your Garter, and then with the same Paws fall to breaking of Butter to make Pye-crust, without washing or wiping them: That — you can put your sweaty Hand in your Bosom, pull out a Flea — and crack it with your Thumb-Nail, and then go to topping and tailing of Gooseberries with the same Claw for my Dinner; and five hundred more such Nastinesses, that I'm above enumerating to thee; Spider!

Cook. Then your Ladyship should keep in your own Province: The Kitchen is the Cook's. Don't you know — *What the Eye never sees, the Heart never rues?*

Lady. Provoking Creature! Isn't my House my own? Shall I be told what Part I'm to be confined to? Pray walk out of it. Your Business is done here.

Cook. Madam, your Servant. [Exit.

Lady. Did you ever hear any Thing so incorrigible? Why this Wench has the Assurance of a Fishwoman! pray Mrs. *Subtle*, isn't my Face altered, since this Creature came to me?

Subtle. As I am always with your Ladyship I can't perceive it so soon as another, but to be sure it must; No-body can eat Dirt and have the same sprightly Air in their Countenance. The Picture of *Adam* is always of a dirt Colour, to shew his Original; and the more Dirt we eat, the more we must look of his Complexion.

B

Lady.

Lady. It's very true. And by Parity of Reason, my Custom of not letting the Sheets touch my Face holds good: for our Laundry is so badly managed by this stupid Hussy, here, that I'm quite afraid of them, and always lie with a Cambrick Handkerchief over it. She makes nothing of letting Fellows come into the Laundry and lay their Paws upon the Linnen as it hangs to harden.

Sarah. I never did so but once, Madam.

Lady. There's Linnen in the Laundry now, that looks like striped Callimancoe, a Streak of yellow shaded with brown for a Yard together, and boiled in, so that it's ruined for ever.

Sarah. I'll tell your Ladyship how it came —.

Lady. Indeed but you sha'n't; so, go about your Business, pray. I have try'd you too long.

[*Exit Sarah.*]

Mary. As your Ladyship will be put to a *Nonplush* for Want of Servants, I will stay again, if you please to ask me.

Lady. Ha! ha! ha! please to ask you! Did you ever hear the like, Mrs. *Subtle*? suppose I should please to ask you, pray, what Service will you do me?

Mary. The best and worst and all I can.

Lady. So, so, we're at Questions and Commands, I find. But let me have a more particular Detail of your Abilities good Mrs. *Houfemaid*. Can you cook, launder, wait, dress and do every thing? for I shall certainly be put to a *Nonplush*: and now — please to ask you.

Mary. Yes, and please your Ladyship, every Thing. Why — when I lived at Home, I used to dress *Vittel* for Ten in Family.

Lady. Ai — very likely — for half a Score Hogs, may-be. Is your Cookery *French* or *English*?

Mary. True *English*, Madam. I can't abide Frogs.

Lady.

Lady. Can you dress a Hare?

Mary. Yes, Madam; I have dressed many an one. Father used to catch 'em in the Corn.

Lady. And what Sauce do you make to it?

Mary. Butter and Vinegar, Madam.

Lady. Very good Sauce, indeed. And what do you make for a Turkey?

Mary. Butter and Vinegar, Madam: very good Sauce for any thing, *cept* Pudding, and then we put a little *Su—gar* into it.

Lady. A sweet Cook, indeed. Well, Mrs. *Butter* and *Vinegar*, you have *nonplused* me with a Vengeance! so you may please to go about your Business and get a better Place. [*Exit Mary.*] What a poor, ignorant Creature this is!

Subtle. I doubt you'll find those you intend to have, exactly of the same Stamp, notwithstanding the housewifely Characters your Ladyship has heard of them. You had the same with the Scullion here.

Lady. Ai, it's true. I'm sorry, *Hannab*, your poor Mother brought you up no better; she was reckoned a good Servant herself. I believe Nature has ordain'd all poor People's Houses to be the Receptacles of Slutttery, that the Spiders may not want Habitations. I need only look at this Wench for a Puke at any Time: To rince Dishes in dirty Water that has a Surface of Grease as thick as a Crown Piece must be wonderful cleanly; and after they have stood in the Dust by the Fire-Side an Hour or two to dry on the Nastiness, they must be polished with a Spruce Linsey-Woolsey Apron larded with Kitchen-Stuff, that you have scowered the Pots and Kettles in for a Fortnight, may-be. A very pretty, huswifely Girl, truly.

Hannab. I always rince 'em in two Waters, Madam.

Lady. What's that to the Purpose, if the last was greasy, and they wanted Six? But you'll do well enough with a Mistress that never looks into her Kitchen; you may even commence Cook there, Child. So, go and mend your Fortune. The laudable Practice of our Grand- [*Exit Hannah.*] mothers is worthy of the loudest Commendation. They spent their Time in looking after their Family-Affairs: and the Education of a young Lady was reckoned as imperfect, then, 'till she had learnt Pastry, Surgery, Botany, Cookery, Pickling and Preserving, as it is unpolite now. But the Monster *Fashion* has made it a Crime in this Age, for a Gentlewoman to look into her Kitchen, or any of the Rooms called the Servant's Rooms, lest, she should see the Poison that is preparing for her every Hour of the Day. Diseases may well get the Footing they do.

Subtle. Our political Grandmothers — to excite Cleanliness, invented the Notion of Fairies, who rewarded the good Housewife's Industry by putting a Piece of Silver in her Shoe, when asleep; but pinched the Slattern 'till she was black and blue. This, they arose in the Night to do, themselves, and soon cured a Girl of Sluttiness.

The Men-Servants advance.

Coachm. I hope your Ladyship will allow me for the ten Pair of white Gloves you ordered me to buy, to drive in.

Lady. Yes. Pray, Mr. *Sumwell*, reimburse the Beau; though he don't deserve a Shilling of it. If you could have found in your Heart to have cleaned your Hands before you had touched the Cushions, the Expence of Mittens might have been saved. But to handle the Coach-Doors and the

the Cushions that I am to sit on, with the same Hands you handle the nasty, greasy Reins with, is abominable, and what no Nice Lady can well bear. Nay, I have seen you take up the Horse's dirty Feet with your naked Hand, and afterwards only wiped it on one of their sweaty Backs, and rested well contented. O filthy Man!

Sum. What do your Gloves come to?

Coach. Twelve and Six-pence, Sir.

Sum. There's your Money. [*Exit Coachman.*]

Footm. and Boy. I hope your Ladyship won't desire us to leave our Liveries.

Lady. No, indeed. You may both keep 'em. I would not have any-body that waits on me wear any Thing so nasty. Look at the Linings of your Coats, those Muckengers that you constantly wipe your Hands on when they are over filthy, and see how they shine with Grease. But as you make your *Exits* — pray beware of the Tallow-Chandlers, lest, they come out and seize you for Kitchen-Stuff. [*Exit Footm. and Boy.*] Mr. *Sumwell*, pray go and shut the Door after them, lest another Fit of Impertinence makes 'em return. Well, Mrs. *Subtle*, it's Time now to look [*Exit Sumwell.*] out for other Servants, is n't it?

Sub. High Time, or rather past Time. I could recommend a Couple, if your Ladyship was not engaged.

Lady. I'm obliged to you. But as you know my Tenants have offered me their Sons and Daughters without Wages, for the Benefit of good Breeding, and I have promised to take such as are fit, I cannot in Honour refuse them the Preference.

Sub. If your Ladyship takes no other — I'm sure you'll be without. People brought up in a Hogsty hate and regret the Trouble of Neatness as bad as we do the Nausea of Nastiness. Would you

you deign to set your Feet within their Parent's Dwellings and see how filthily these cleanly Farmers live, you'd soon alter your Sentiments, and forswear Butter and Cheese as heartily as Hogwash, notwithstanding the decent Characters you have heard of them.

Lady. The Thought is good. We'll go and disguise ourselves, and make them a Visit. They have seldom seen us, and in the Appearance of Servants, will never suspect who we be.

Sub. The only expedient your Ladyship could have thought on, for a Test.

Lady. Come then. We'll go and prepare this Minute. Mr. Sumwell! [*calls.*]

Enter Sumwell.

Sum. Did your Ladyship call me?

Lady. Yes, Mr. Sumwell. I must beg you to keep House with Betty, till Mrs. Subtle and I return. We are going out a little Way. [*Exit with Subtle.*]

Sum. Yes, Madam, I shall. Here, come this Way, Farmer Dungwell. [*beckoning.*]

Enter Dungwell.

Now, let me hear what you have to say.

Dung. Why I'm come Sir, to have you *new* my Lease, now the Times coming on to be almost past being out.

Sum. Provided you'll lay no more Dung on the Land, your Lease may be renewed, but not otherwise. Lady *Nice* is so disturbed at the Smell of it, that she's resolved to keep it in her own Hands if you cannot comply.

Dung. Oods! Is her Ladyship such a Fool? How does she think the Lond will bring forth? in a little Time it will be as bare and barren as a Turnpike

pike Road. How the Dickens must a Man make his Rent if he may not Muck? Why I have been forced to lay on such Loads to make it bearable, that 'tis now all Muck itself.

Sum. Then it will want no more, Master *Dungwell*. So, the sooner you look out for another Farm—the more Time you'll have to remove in; for the Lady's as fixed as fate, provided the Condition of this Obligation is not strictly complied with.

Dung. Say you so, Mr. *Sumwell*? You have put me into a strange *Squanderry*. I can't part with the *Lond*. I love the *Lond*; and will give you Two Guineas to *new* my Lease; and let the *Lond* take his *Chauce*.

Sum. A Person that wants it out of your Hands, offered me Five—no longer ago than Yesterday, and I refused them.

Dung. You *Shawnt* to Day, *howsever*. And there 'em be. But I hope, Sir, you'll shut [*gives Money*. your Eyes when you look our Way, lest they should be offended with the *Smell* of any *Taste* that the Wind may bring to your *Ears* when you feel it blow raw in a misty Morning.

Sum. You're an old Tenant——and shan't be turned out.

Dung. Thank you, thank you, Mr. *Sumwell*. Mr. *Sumwell*, your Servant [*going*] O! but now I think on't, Mr. *Sumwell*, pray how does my *Laady* do? does she talk now and then, sometimes, now she's in the Country, of, of, of——having my Wench to wait upon her? Ha? Gad! she's grown lustily, lately, feck; and would do all the Work in the House——*Hall*, tho' I mean. Yes, yes, I don't keep her idle. For when she sits still——she's hard at Work at Spinning; and will earn as much a Day as the Taylor, by'r *Laady*.

Sum.

Sum. She's very industrious indeed. What — is she a good, tight, well-shap'd Girl, and fit for a genteel Service?

Dung. Yes, yes; she's fit for any Thing, though I say it, and tight enough too, for a Farmer's Daughter. *Ecod* the best Lord in the *Land* might make a Meal of her, Breakfast, Dinner and Supper, and not *disparish* his Honour. I'll make her put on her Linnen-Gown and send her to you, Mr. *Sumwell*, if you'll be so kind as to do me the Favour to *interline* her, for my *Laady* has a Mind to have her we hear. And it will be the making of her you know, Sir.

Sum. Well, if she answers your Description I'll *interline* her, never fear.

Dung. Will you, indeed? well, I always said you was a good-natured Sort of a Gentleman *asore* I knowed you; and I don't doubt but I shall live to see you a Squire or a Justice of Peace, of your own Accord, by and by. Well, she shall come. You'll be sure to do her Business for her.

Sum. Yes; if she's agreeable — and willing.

Dung. Ad! she shall be willing: I'll take the strong Stick to her, else. Well, good by, by, or bye to you, Sir. [*going*] But hark you, Mr. *Sumwell*, I had forgot one Thing.

Sum. What's that?

Dung. I had forgot to put you in Mind — that you didn't remember — to ask me to drink.

Sum. Indeed Farmer, I should not have thought of it. But now I do — remember — we have never a Butler.

Dung. No! Ad! blues, will you take me? I can draw Beer, Ale, *Wind*, Cyder, Sack, Brandy, Punch, Claret, Geneva or any Thing, that I can; and drink it when I have done. Why at our Wake I draw all the Drink in the House, *mun*. And as for *Bilitties* in

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in Drinking — Adod, I can outdo the Parson ; and scorn to turn my Back to e'er a Butler in *England*. Let me loose in the Cellar for a Trial, and you shall see what I can do. I'll draw, never fear.

Sum. And let all the Liquor about the House, maybe. Come — follow me, and I'll *interline* you, presently. [Exit.]

Enter Nice and Subtle, dressed like Servants.

Lady. We need no other Disguise than these two ordinary Gowns, I believe. We must also endeavour to speak in Character.

Sub. Your Ladyship may honour me with the major Part of that Office, who have been more conversant in Country Matters than you.

Lady. Agreed. You shall be Speaker, then; and I'll — like the Sovereign, only give my Assent. But we need't say much, as we go but to see.

Sub. That Gratification will be soon obtained; and make the Sage ashamed of his Proverb, that says, *The Eye is never satisfied with seeing*. But I suppose he had never seen a Country House, or was no Nice Person. [A Knocking.]

Lady. Prithee, look out and see who that is. It sounds like a Knock of Distinction.

Sub. 'Tis *Allwit*, by *Juno*!

Lady. O, hang him! A troublesome Fop. What could bring him here? Mr. *Sumwell*! [Calls quickly!]

Enter Sumwell.

Tell the Gentleman at the Door, there's nobody at Home but yourself.

Sum. Very well, Madam. [Exit.]

Lady. What the Duce could bring this Butterfly hither?

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Sub. Something about your Ladyship.

Lady. He shan't see me if I can help it. Where shall we wander to, first?

Sub. Your Tenant *Dungwell* lives the nearest; and his Daughter's Character seems to be the most Amiable of any your Ladyship has mentioned yet.

Lady. Parents are partial to their Children, I know. But every Thing I have heard of her, can't be false, sure.

Sub. Her Age may be right, and perhaps, her Size; but for the Rest — I doubt they're of that Species of Learning, which Mr. *Johnson* tells us, the polite Ancients called *Hyperboles*.

Lady. O, you fashionable Creature, you are too Sceptrical. I wonder you believe Mr. *Johnson*, so much as you do.

Sub. I'll assure your Ladyship, I don't take every Thing to be Gospel that comes from him. There are Parsons that are not Prophets, as well as Women that are not Housewives.

Lady. You're a sad Libertine. Come, we'll go thro' the Garden, lest we meet any body. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Allwit and Sumwell.

Allw. Death! Man. Don't I know the Way of the Ladies! I say, she is at home! And she shall be at home. I have Lord Chief Justice *Cupid's* Warrant in my Pocket, and will search the House! I'll ransack every Room, Closet, Coffe and Corner, from the Cockloft to the Coalhole, but I'll find her. You, are her Steward, I presume. Some Day or other I shall be thy Master, and a good Master I'll be. Thou shalt drink Burgundy and Champaign, every Hour in the Day, old Boy. But where is she? [*Opens the Door*] Lady Nice! [*Calls*] An't he a bold Fellow, to storm a strong Hold, and take

take a Widow by Assault? Ha, old *Reckon-right*?
[*Looks into the other Door*] Why, here's nobody to
be seen! The House is a Desert. Where are the
Rest of Ye?

Sum. I told you, before, Sir, the Family was
Abroad.

Alkw. O, thou art a Limb of the Law, and hast
been a Liar all thy Life-Time. I'd as soon believe
a Bawd as such a Fellow as thou art. Thy Lips
have uttered more Lies than there are Letters in
Littleton's Dictionary. Soho! Tom! Dick! Harry!
[*Calls.*] What a Pox, Is the Widow broke! Ha,
pandar! You must excuse me Master *Reckon-right*,
I'm in a *Bon Humour* to Day. A most extraordi-
nary Inundation of Wit has broke loose upon me,
and almost overwhelmed the Sluices of my Brain-
Pan. And so — the Widow is Abroad, for cer-
tain. Prithee, where is she gone? Come, none of
your Shifts; your studied Fetches, old *Circumben-
dibus*. Speak direct, adroit, *apropos*, and to the
Purpose. Is she in Coach, Chariot or Chair?
drawn by Horses or Dragons? Doves or Peacocks?
Is she *Venus*, *Juno* or *Ceres*? *Ceres*, by this Light!
For *Ceres* like the Widow, is the Goddess of Plenty.
But *Venus* and *Juno* were poor Creatures; the
Husband of one was a Bully, and to'ther a Black-
smith.

Enter Dungwell.

Dung. Ah — Mr. *Sumwell*. you're a Wag! a
mere Wag, i'faith. I have been round and round
the Cellar, and there's ne'er a Barrel a Broach, by
the Mass. You have made an *April Fool* of me.
Odsso! I ask your pardon, Sir. — I did not ob-
serve this fine Squire, here. Pray Squire, under
Submission, don't your Honour an'like your Wor-
ship, attend to marry my Lady Nice? Because if

you do an' please your Honour, I am one of your Lordship's, *Laadyship's* Tenants; and hope you will let me be one of your Javelinmen, when your Worship comes to be high Sheriff.

Allw. That thou shalt, old *Iffachar*. Prick up thy Ears and look tall, for thou shalt be Colonel of the Javelinmen, and my peculiar Deputy at the Executions. Thou shalt be as great as the three Destinies, and have the Power of Life and Death in thy own Hands, old *Triptolémus*.

Dung. Thank your Worship's Honour for all your other Favours, but I can't *trip* to *Limehouse*, any more, I'm afraid. I'm stiff now, Squire; these curled *Ramackicks* have done my Business for *stripping*, pretty well, foie *George*: They have tripped me up a Score of odd Times within these seven Years. Mr. *Sumwell* — I found a Bottle tho', and broached that, to let you know I wou'dn't go a Foraging for nothing. 'Tis rare Stuff! I cou'dn't drink above five fourths of it, 'twas so plaguety Strong. Shall I fetch your Honour a Hornful? I shall make your Highness a brave Butler, so you'll *cept* of me for the Place. I can be a Colonel of Executions besides.

Sum. Get you home to your Wife, you old Sor, or she'll fill you a couple of Horns, by and by.

Allw. Let him alone, old *Soberfides*, I like his Humour. The Fellow's a downright Country Wit. He's no Scholar its true; but he's no Fool by *Apollo*, *Ergo*, he's a Wit.

Dung. Her'll go for a Wit? No, Squire; I an't a *Welchman*, neither. You should say, he'll go for a Wit; and that's true enough, for I was born a Wit; and will be a Wit: And next 'Sizes am to be a Wit—ness. Well, Mr. *Sumwell*, you'll do what you can for my Daughter, I hope. Other-
wise

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wife I'll get the Squire to *interline* her. He looks like a good-natured sort of a kind Gentleman.

Allw. Is she handsome or young?

Dung. Yes, Sir; both.

Allw. Go and fetch her, old Boy: I'll *interline* her immediately.

Dung. But, my Lady's Abroad, I believe now. I see none of the Servants about.

Allw. Where dost live, old Lot?

Dung. At the *Grange*, *crass* the *Grounds*, Sir.

Allw. Go and order your Daughter to put on clean Linnen, and I'll come in half an Hour's Time, and *Reconnoitre* her *Outworks*.

Dung. Yes, and please your Worship; she shall put on her Mother's *Holland* Smock, and wash her Face, against you come. [Exit.

Allw. Well, old *Coke* upon *Littleton*, will you confess or be pinked thro' the Body; where is this Widow Lady of thine, ha?

Sum. I think she went to the Parson's.

Allw. To the Parson's! What a lucky Dog am I! If I catch her there — slap dash, I shall fire at her point blank, and lay her as flat as a Flounder. She's gone the high Road of Matrimony, and I'll immediately borrow one of *Cupid's* Post Chaises and overtake her in the very Portal of *Hymen*. Steward! Adieu. Here — fellows! Boors! Where are ye. [Exit hastily, as he calls his Servants.

Sum. Pert Coxcomb! shallow brained Puppy! to think a Gentlewoman of Lady *Nice's* extraordinary Qualifications and Estate, would stoop to his silly Lure.

But every Fellow with a brazen Face,
A Pint of Powder, and a Pound of Lace:
Presumes to think he's qualified to please,
Wit, Wealth, and Beauty, with a deal of Ease.

Rus

But well-bred Women now, are wiser grown,
And won't be won by mere Outside alone:
They measure Merit, and consider Parts,
And find a Man — before they yield their Hearts.

[Exit

The End of the First Act.

ACT II SCENE I.

Farmer Dungwell's House.

*Lady Nice and Subtle in Disguise, brought in by
Dungwell. Margery and Ailce meeting them.*

Dung. COME, Lasses, come you in. These
are two of my *Laady's* head Servants,
Wife: Two *London* Lasses. — *Ailce* — do you
mind and talk fine, Wench, as they do, Ad! I
wondered who ye were, a making up to our House
as I came from the Hall. [Hiccups.] I war'nt now,
you were both of ye some decayed Gentlewomen
or other, when ye were in your Prosperity; and
used to eat as good Pudding and Meat as my
Laady. You have deadly strong Beer there [Hiccups.]
Ailce! If you go to live at the Hall, you'll drink
nothing else, it is so toothsome, Girl.

Sub. My Lady has heard a good Report of her,
and has sent us to see what she can do. For if she
has not been brought up to Business, she won't do
for her.

Mar. O, she has been always used to Business,
and can do any thing. Come, *Ailce*, fetch out the

Vinell

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Vittle. You shall soon see what a handy Girl she is. You'll eat some *Pork-poy*, won't you?

[*Ailce goes and fetches two Pork-pyes, a Tin Pot of Beer, and some rusty Knives; and lays them on the bare Table.*]

Lady. No, no, don't trouble yourself, goody *Dungwell.* We have just been eating.

Mar. Nay, nay, but you shall eat some *Pork-poy* with us. They're deadly Good, and of *Ailce's* making. We *kilt* half a Hog last Week, and what don't do for Bacon we make *Pork-poy*s with. My Girl's a deadly Lais for such Sort of *Vittle*.

Sub. Kill'd half a Hog, last Week! Pray when do you kill the other Half?

Dung. O, you don't understand our Country Way; Farmer *Nastynose* and me *kilt* one between us. You *Londinners* don't know how it is to make Bacon; [*Hiccops*] you may think the *Flitches* grow upon Oak Trees like Deal Boards.

Sub. Exactly.

Dung. Ha! ha! ha! I thought so. Come, *Ailce*, bring the Trenchers. Wench. — *Ailce* will soon learn you better Knowledge, never fear. If my *Laady* wants any good Bacon and Eggs, Pancake or *Pork-poy*, you can't *disvice* how well the Slut does them. I'll turn her loose with all the *Londinners* the King has for those Things. She has been used to 'em from her *Cradle*; and seldom eat any other Spoon-meat when she was a Child in *Airms*.

Lady. Bacon's a fattening Diet; and her Shape gives the strongest Indications of it. But that I suppose you reckon to look comely in the Country.

Dung. Yes, yes; we do so. The Girl's Shape's well enough, only her Belly's a little round shouldered. [*Hiccops*] Come, pray sit you down,

[*Ailce*

[*Ailce throws the Trenchers on the Table.*]
 These Knives should have had a Rub upon the
 Groundfill for Strangers, *Ailce*. [*Wipes two Knives*
on his Breeches.] Come, sit you down I say.

[*Forces them down: Wipes two Trenchers with his*
Coat-Lappet, and parts a Pye between them; taking
another for himself.]

You shall sit down. There —— this is some of
Ailce's Cookery, and good *Poy* it is; and that
 you'll both say when you have filled your Bellies
 with it.

Lady. Indeed, we can't eat: Our Bellies are full
 already.

Sub. And I am Sick.

Marg. Sick? Odso! I'm sorry for that. Will
 you have a little Cowslip Wine hotted? *Ailce* ——
 bring the Pipkin and the Cloves and Mace that we
 boiled in some —— for your Father, last Week.
 We live pretty far from the Shop, and so are forced
 to be wary of our Spice, and save it to use over
 and over again. [*Exit Ailce.*]

Lady. You are very saving indeed.

Marg. Yes, yes; we had need; for its very dear.
 It don't grow here as it does in *London*. But it
 has so much *Virtu*, that if you use it ten Times
 over, it will still have a Taste.

Sub. Pray don't give yourselves any Trouble
 about me, for I have only over eat myself a little,
 and shall be better presently. I've a very poor
 Constitution, and seldom eat any thing but I'm ill
 after it.

Marg. O, you'd better try to rid your Stomach
 a little. *Ailce*, [*calls*] bring the black Pot from
 under the Bed i'th' Parlour. —— Or, shall I call
 the

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the Boy to shew you into the Garden? you'll be better when you're easier, mayhap.

Sub. No, no; I'm better already, I find. Pray call *Ailce* back again.

Lady. She's often so, Goody; and don't mind it.

Marg. Ai, you *Londinners* have all the Green Sicknels. they say. When you come to be tumbled upon the Haycocks in the Country a Summer or two, you'll get rid of that, never fear.

Dung. Here, here, swallow this Piece of fat, and it will cure the Green Sicknels and blue too. Here's Pork, and you talk of good Living. Shew me such a Piece of fat Pork as this is, in *London*, and I'll give you leave to carry home all the rest in your Pockets.

Enter Ailce with the Pot.

Ailce. What, is the Gentlewoman going to spew, Mother?

Lady. O, you'll turn your Father's Stomach, Child.

Dung. No, no; turn my Stomach! She might as soon turn the House. I an't so *squawmish*. I once dined with a *Dutchman* upon a dead Dog, that had laid seven Summer's Days in a Ditch, for a Wager of Half a Crown; and though I saw the Maggots squeezed out at each Corner of his Mouth, I never flinched, but eat a Joint and won the Money.

Sub. O, the Devil take your Stomach! [*She and the Lady keck and run off.*]

Dung. Ha, ha, ha; These are your puny stomached *Londinners*; your Green Sicknels Folks, forsooth, take 'em the Pot, *Ailce*. [*Exit Ailce.*] I hope I han't affronted them tho'. Run after 'em Wife, and ask them to have a little red Poppy-
D Water;

Water; for if they should make any Mischief about it at the Hall, I sha'nt get my Lease new'd, mayhap.

[Exit Margery.]

What Fools some Folks are, to refuse such pure good *Pork-poy* as this is? Come *Dungwell*, good *Vittel* deserves good Drink; and so here's to thee, old Boy. [*Drinks a long Pull.*] good Drink, did I say? ah! — It was good Drink — before I tasted my *Laady Nice's*, but it's *Taplash* now.

Enter Ailce with the Pot again.

Ailce. They are both gone; scampering away as if they were mad.

Dung. You should have run after them, and over-catched them, and then they would have *interlined* you to my *Laady*.

Ailce. Yes, indeed, with this Pot in my Hand.

Dung. You might had hid that under a Hedge.

Ailce. But I ha'nt t'other Gown on, you know.

Enter Margery in Surprise.

Marg. Lud! Husband, here's the finest *Mon* coming thro' the Orchard, that ever was seen. Do but come out and look at him.

Ailce. Ai, do, Father. Let's go and stand behind one of the Apple-Trees and see what Sort of a fine *Mon* it is.

Dung. Some genteel Beggar or other, I suppose.

Marg. Beggar! you Buzzard! he looks more like a King. And now I think on't, I warn't 'tis the King of the Gypsies; for they say, he goes as fine as any other King.

Dung. Come, then; we'll go and see this fine *Mon*. [*As they are going out Allwit meets them.*]

Allw. Is this the Parlon's, prithee? — Ha! old *Downright!* — Is this thy Dwelling, my demy Destiny?

Dung.

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Dung. O! Squire! your humble Servant. —
Ailce, make your Courtesy, Hussy. — Yes,
 Squire, this is my House: and this is my Daughter
 that I told you of. But you are come so soon that
Margery has not had Time to put her on t'other
 Geer. Won't your Honour come and sit down?
 Wife! fetch the Great Chair from the Bed's Side:
 Squire's a great Mon.

Allw. O, this will do. [*Sits at the Table.*] and
 this is your Daughter, you say?

[*The Women get behind him and whisper.*]

Dung. Yes, Sir. This is she I wanted to have
 interferred.

Allw. Interlined, I suppose you mean.

Dung. Yes, yes; an't please your Worship's
 Goodness, I would have her *interlined*, as you say.
 Come forward, Hussy, and shew your Face.

Allw. She needn't be ashamed of it, if I am a
 Judge. Come, pretty Maid, do as your Father
 bids you; sure, you a'n't afraid of a Man, you
 little plump Rogue. [*Takes hold of her.*] You
 did not spare for Stuff, Farmer, in the making;
 and good Stuff it is. No Signs of Green Sicknes
 here.

Ailce. Green Sicknes! no, Sir, I a'n't like you
 London Lasses that lie a Bed till Noon, and loo-
 like a sh--tt--n Clout. I rise at Four o'Clock
 Milk the Cows and serve the Hogs by Five, eat a
 good Lunch of Bread and Cheese before Six, and
 am ready for my Breakfast at Nine.

Allw. The right Road to Health, by *Jupiter*!
 just so lived *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*; and just so
 I should like to live myself. But Custom —
 evil Custom, the Preverter of much good Manage-
 ment, has made me swerve too often lately, from
 the Thing I love.

Dung. Ah, Squire, you can afford to lie a Bed every Morning till Twelve o'Clock i'th' Afternoon; but we *mun* get up to earn your Rent. This is my *Laady Nice's* Sweetheart, Wife.

Marg. O *Gemini*! is it? I ask your Worship's Pardon that I did not know your Honour sooner.

Allw. 'Tis very well, Goody — *Dorothy*, I think your Name is. I have heard you often commended by *Lady Nice*.

Marg. No, Sir, — *Margery*, 'twas my Mother's Name, and several more of our *Posterity*, that have lived in this Parish ever since — before the Church was built.

Allw. Ai, *Margery*, that's right; and a very good Name it is: it signifies Motherly in *Greek* and Mistress in *Hebrew*.

Marg. What a sweet Thing it is to be a *Scholar*? to be sure your Worship was brought up at the *Varsity*, and knows every Thing. *Ailce*, reach down the Pewter Tankard, and blow the Dust off it, that your Father may have it to fill full of Ale. And bring another *Pork-poy*, that Squire may bite a Bit afore he eats.

Allw. No, no, Goody. She sha'n't fetch any Thing for me. I can't stay above two Minutes longer.

Ailce. O dear! pray Sir, stay and take me along with you, Father! speak to Squire to stay a little longer. I sha'n't be dressed in that Time; for two Minutes I suppose, is not above a quarter of an Hour.

Dung. Ai, pray Squire, be as big as your Word. Poor *Ailce* is very *ambitious* you see of being under your Subjection; and I hope you'll have no Cause to repent of your Kindness to her. For besides, what she can do for you, — you know, I'm to be
your

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your Butler, and your——your——Lieutenant Corporal of the Javelin Men at the Sizes.

Mary. Al, pray Sir, do. Stay a little *crum*; just whilst she puts on one of my Shifts. 'Tis the Shift I was married in.

Allw. And lost your Maidenhead in. Well, if two Minutes were two Ages, I'd see the End of them, sooner than disoblige so engaging a Family. And do you intend to lose your Maidenhead my pretty Shepherdess, in this Patrimonial Vesture?

Ailce. Yes, Sir, Mayhap. [*Exit with Margery.*]

Dung. Ha, ha, ha. Well done Squire. You're a merry Wag, I find, and fit for a Widow. But I should be glad to hear you talk so, this time Twelve-month.

Allw. This time Twelve-month! Old Barley-Corn; why, what should ail me? dost think the Widow will break my Voice? No, no, Lieutenant-Corporal, I'm too musculous for that.

Dung. Musculous? What old Soldier was he, Sir?

Allw. O, a brawny Hero. Just such another *Hercules* as thyself.

Dung. O, *Hargalus* and *Partheny*. We have the Book on't, somewhere; and a pretty Book it is, *waunds*! *Ailce* can read in it——as readily as the Parson——can read his A, B, C. But now we talk of the Parson——this Wench has forgot to bring me the Tankard; and to be sure Squire, you're a Dry by this Time.

Allw. You must excuse me. I ha'n't dined yet. I am going to suck a Bit of Tythe Pig with Mr. *Yellowband*, the Levite. Prithee step to the Door and shew me the House. [*going*] And after Dinner I'll call and take *Ailce* in my Hand.

Dung. O, Sir, I'll go along with your Honour to the House, and shew you the nearest way back again.

Allw.

Alto. By no means. I came without my Servants, because I would not put him to Charges. His Living's but small yet; but I shall mend it.

Dung. O, pretty well, Sir. Forty Pounds a Year is a pretty Thing for doing of nothing. There — that's his House with the crooked chimney, Sir. [Pointing.

Enter Ailce in her Under-Petticoat.

Ailce. Pray Squire, remember to come again. I'm just going to put on the *Holland Smock*, and long to be interlined.

Alto. Never fear, my Rubylip. I won't fail thee. *Downtight* — Adieu. [Exit Ailce, running; the others following.

SCENE. A Room at the Hall.

Enter Sumwell and Worthy.

Sum. If you'll submit to my Management, Nephew, Lady Nice is your own. Her Peculiarities will be conquered by Compliances; and her Person by Perseverance and Complacency. You must fall in with her Foibles — speak as she speaks, and like nothing but what she approves of.

Wor. I'm informed, she's mighty hard to please; so nice and so difficult that no Servant can stay with her; so capricious and full of herself, that every thing makes her uneasy that is not done by her Directions.

Sum. Every Woman in Nature has some Singularity; Lady Nice's is Neatness; a Virtue rather than a Vice.

Wor. Is she handsome, Sir?

Sum. She is not ugly. You'll be sure to like her. Mediums are better than Extremes. You shall judge for yourself.

Wor.

Wor. I fear, the Conquest will not be so easy as you imagine, Sir; these wary Widows are like walled Towns, not to be taken but on good Conditions, or by a Storm: and I want Ability for the first, and Experience for the latter.

Sum. Courage — you mean. You are too diffident for a Soldier. However, you may lessen your Fears: Mrs. *Subtle* her Confidante, and myself have settled the Business already, in such a Manner, that little is left for you to do, but to follow our Directions, and act as Circumstances require.

Wor. I shall obey two such Lodestars with Implicit Obedience. But a certain Consideration called future Happiness, gives me a little Concern, I know People past the Meridian of Life think Money the *Summum Bonum* of all human Felicity: But as I — am young, and not yet arrived to that mellow Pitch of Knowledge, my Conceptions are callow, and see not the Advantage of such a Match, where *Love* that leads others by a Hair, must now be dragged by a Cable himself.

Sum. You can't dislike her. She's a very good Woman. A most extraordinary Woman! Your Great Grandmother was just such another. She fed the Hungry, cloathed the Naked, healed the Sick, and starved all the Apothecaries in the Parish. And —

Wor. Pray Sir, is she as old, too?

Sum. No.

Wor. She has 'a Plenitude of the same Virtues, I presume. Poor Apothecaries!

Sum. She is a Lady of innumerable Virtues; and dispenses more Goodness every Day than the old Miser, that died lately, worth a Million, ever did in his whole Life. She has Chastity, Temperance, Fortitude, Frugality, Neatness, Wisdom, and

and so forth, with Three Thousand Pounds a Year. Now, pray Sir, what have you?

Wor. Faith, Hope and Charity: Three pretty Qualifications, but no Thousands. My Father had too much Generosity, and I am his Heir.

Sum. Since the Time of his Death I have stood in his Stead, and been no defective Support. I would willingly now, see you stand alone, and require no longer the dependance of a Prop.

Wor. Sir, you have behaved with a Father's Care and Tenderness; I own it, and thank you with the Duty of a Child. But do not withdraw that Indulgence now.

Sum. I am not about it. Can an agreeable Lady and Three Thousand Pounds a Year make you suspect it? Bless us! What Man would refuse such an Offer? Or think he could suffer the least Unhappiness with such a Fortune? Why, you'll have Money enough to purchase Happiness of any Kind; and may live like a Prince. But since you seem to dissent — no more force Meat. I'll have her myself. Three Thousand Pounds a Year! Had she no more Virtues than a Village Alewife, I would not forego her with that Appurtenance. I'm very much in her good Graces, and shall hardly be refused; I know her Affairs — and shall be very convenient to her.

Wor. Sir, your Pleasure is a Law to me, and ever was. I was only willing to see the Lady before I promised her Marriage; and that you can't think unreasonable. But when I am blessed with a Sight of her, and find she is not so old as my Great Grandmother, nor so ugly as Lady *Frightful*, I shall bend my Inclinations to my Duty, and make them act in Concert.

Sum. You must be a Traveller — and have a vast Estate in the other World —

Wor.

Wor. I'm sure I've none in this.

Sum. I mean in the new World — the Indies.

Wor. But then I shall cheat her. I can't think of that!

Sum. Then think of the three Cardinal Virtues, you mentioned just now, and feed on them. The last is the greatest, and that begins at home.

Wor. They are airy Diet, galb'd my Lordships Abroad.

Sum. Lordships! They must be Principalities. Come into my Study, and I'll shew you a Plan of them.

Wor. I doubt it's a rough Draught. *(Exit Sum.)*

SCENE III. A Field.

Allwit meeting Johnson.

Allw. Doctor, I'm your most obedient. I presume you are the Rector of this Parish.

Johns. The Vicar — at your Service, Sir.

Allw. O, that's a paughty Dignity. I — come like your good Genius, to declare you a Rector. You shall be Rector of this Parish. I have said it — ordained it. And if you make Words of it — I shall make you a Dean.

Johns. I am something at a Loss to know properly how to thank you, Sir.

Allw. No Words — as I told you before, *Doctor.* I'm informed there's a Lady at your House called *Nice*; a Lady of Ladies, whom I have singled out from a whole Nation of Ladies to be my Lady.

Johns. I am not so happy, Sir, as to have so distinguished a Personage under my Roof at present, neither have I seen her this Day.

Allw. O, you're wrong. You're wrong. I know she's there. Her Steward told me no less.

Johns. Sir, I wouldn't tell you a Lie for the Lady's Estate.

Allw. That's a Thumper, I'm sure. Nor tell a Lie for Three Thousand Pounds a Year! Why, I'd tell a Million for the Tythe of such an Estate.

Johns. You are only in Jest, Sir. Parsons and Lawyers are standing Jests with the *Beau Monde*.

Allw. By my Honour! I'm in Earnest; and seriously think there's never a Parson in *England* but would tell as many — for a small Benefice I have to bestow, — or shall have — when I marry the Widow. I hope you'll deserve it, and learn to lie against the Time.

Johns. No, Sir, — I scorn to accept of it upon any such Terms. And am sorry to hear a Gentleman of your Figure and Pretensions talk so meanly and immoral.

Allw. Thou art a rural Prig, and never wast at Court.

Johns. Nor your Honour at Church, I suppose. We are apt to be ignorant of what we ne'er see.

Allw. At Church! ha, ha, ha, What should a fine Gentleman do at Church? and were he disposed to be there — you keep such mechanic Hours, that the Service is over and the Doors shut up, before a fine Gentleman leaves his Bed. But a Pox of your Preaching! you have made me run from my Subject, as you do from your Text. The Lady! the Lady, Vicar, is the Object of my Enquiry, whom you positively aver is not at your Hermitage.

Johns. She is hot.

Allw. Then I've nothing farther to say to thee, nor thy Doctrine neither. I'm a Freethinker — that is — one that never thinks at all — about Religion.

The NICE LADY. 31

Religion. Are you qualified to grant a Licence, if the Widow and I should meet in the same Sphere?

Johns. I am, Sir.

Allw. But where can I get a Ring?

Johns. I can furnish you with that, too. I have a Brother a Jeweller, that has just lodged a few in my Hands for that Purpose.

Allw. That's just right then. Doctor — adieu.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. Cartrope's House.

Lady Nice and Mrs. Subtle, knocking — with
their Feet on the Floor.

Sub. [Calling.] Farmer Cartrope! Cartrope! what House-keeping here is? the Doors open — and No-body at home.

Lady. They are hard by, I suppose, and will be here presently. I can but think how narrowly we escaped *Allwit*, as we were coming out of *Dungwell's*.

Sub. 'Twas narrow indeed. But a Miss is as good as a Mile. Well, Madam, this is Scene the Second, which will be similar, I suppose, to Scene the First. Will your Ladyship try a Third?

Enter Cartrope in a Carter's Frock, Carroty, and Dorcas jumping.

Cart. I thought I heard some-body call. You belong to the Smugglers, I suppose. Have they brought any Brandy?

Sub. Smugglers! what do you mean? we belong to the Hall, and are sent by my Lady to hire your Daughter, if your Name's *Cartrope*.

Cart. Yes — I be *Cartrope*; and this is *Dorcas*; and a good *dulgent* Wench it is too; and un-

derstands every Thing, from a Squire to a Beggar.

Lady. Can she sew?

Cart. No. But her Brother *Roger* can, and plough too, and *Doreas* — can drive.

Lady. I mean — sew, with a Needle!

Cart. O! I cry your Mercy. Yes, yes, she can sew, and knit too. She made me this Frock, see, how well it is sewed. And this Shirt — but *Carrotty* spun it. It's pretty fine — considering how coarse it is. But we mun have 'em strong for our Work, you know Mistress. And as she can knit — she'll be very useful to new Foot her Ladyship's Stockens; or make her new ones for *Sundays*: she new Foots her own every Month a'most; for she has deadly *swotty* Feet; and that rots the Hose out a great Pace, you know.

Carrotty. Go to *Dorothy Soufereown's*, *Doreas*, and fetch Home the Needle that Mistress may see how fast you can sew. [*Exit Doreas.*]

Sub. Can she mark too, Goody?

Carr. Yes, yes, she can Mark. She seldom goes to Bed without Marking — the Cieling, with the Smoak of her Candle. You may see all the Letters in the Hornbook and more too, if you'll walk up in the Garret. And at Clipping Time she marks all the Sheep.

Lady. She won't be wanted for that; — what Sort of a Huswife is she in the Kitchen?

Carr. O, dear, we have never a one. We have only a House, Parlour and Dairy, forsooth. But she's Huswife good enough; and very saving and Genus. We had a Calf died about a Month ago, and she contrived to keep it sweet till 'twas all eaten, tho' we lived upon't a Fortnight, or more; for when it was upon the Turn — she pickled it in Whey, and made it as sweet as new Milk from the Cow.

Lady.

Lady. Why, do you eat dead Calves?

Carr. Yes, yes, we can't afford to lose 'em: That is n't the Way to pay Rent. If they w'n't rotten, they eat never the worse for dying.

Sub. Charming eating! indeed. And *Dorcas* is very Genus, at pickling and preserving, truly. No Doubt but she could preserve a dead Dog upon Occasion, and eat him too.

Lady. Can she wash?

Carr. Yes, pur Country Way. We wash with Pig Dung.

Lady. How! with Pig-Dung?

Carr. Yes, Mistress. This is *Lincolnsbi—er*, where Hogs sh— Soap, and Cows sh— Fire.

Lady. O, filthy! you amaze me.

Sub. I have heard of such Things, but never believed them! You wash the Dishes with a Bunch of Nettles, too, don't you?

Carr. Yes, and save Dishclouts. Won't you please to eat something with us? we have some good Bacon-breath and t'r cold, yet. Will you have a Dish'ul? Fetch the new Noggins, Husband.

Lady. No, no; it's no matter. We can't eat. Come back, Farmer.

Carr. I hear say, my Lady has a strange Way of Washing; that all her Cloaths are washed in cold Water.

Sub. You have heard so?

Carr. Yes, truly! Does she scald 'em in cold Water, too?

Sub. Constantly!

Carr. That's strange, too!

Sub. 'Tis a Secret only known to herself, and those she is pleased to communicate it to.

Enter Dorcas.

Dor. O, Mother! Mother! we are all ruined. *Soufsecrown* has broke the *Neegle*. A--pyes take her, I say. What must we do now? Father has no Stockens mended, to go to Market in.

Carr. Well, we can't help it, Child. He must slip his Boots over them, and buy another.

Dor. But I hope you'll make her pay for't. Such a great *Neegle* as that was worth Six-pence.

Enter Cartrope, with an Arm-full of Noggins, and an Handful of Salt.

Cartr. Here's the Noggins; they've never been handfelled, and I was *Zolved* they never should, 'till we [Blows the Dust out of them, into his own Eyes. had some Gentlefolks to use 'em. Where's the Porridge-Pot, Wife? you'll ha' some *Zalt* in 'em, won't you? [Throws the Salt into some of them.

Lady. No, no; I tell you we'll have none of your *Bacon-Broth*, nor any thing else. Our Bellies are full.

Cartr. They're of *Dorcas's* making, and you shall taste 'em, *fee*; that you may see what a good Cook the *Carrion* is. There's Gobs of *Bacon* as big as your Bubbies in't, you little Rogues, you. [Exit.

Lady. O! *nauseous*! *Carroty*, fetch me a little Water to rince my Mouth, after it.

Carr. Yes, troth, that I will. [Exit.

Lady. *Dorcas*! go and dress you; and we'll call for you as we come back.

Dor. Yes; and I'll put on a clean Smock — for may-be, I may lye there, if my Lady likes me.

[Exit.

Sub. Now the Coast is clear, let us shoot the *Pit*, as Mr. *Sumwell* calls it. Or else — we shall be overdone with Services, presently.

Lady.

Lady. I sent the Woman away for that Purpose.
Dorcas will not do for me. *[Exit Dorcas.]*

*Enter Cartrope breaching a Dish; eating and
 flabbering.*

Cart. Here, here — here's a Mess for one of
 Ye, and the Wench is crumming t'other. Ha,
 ha, where a Murrain are ye all run? Holloa!
 Mistress! — I don't know what to call 'em. And
Carrotty! *[calls.]* where be you? *[eats.]*

[Enter Carrotty with a large Bowl of Water.]

Carr. Here, Mistress, — here be Water enou'
 for you. Where's the Gentlewomen, Husband?

Cart. I don't know. — Gone along with *Dor-*
cas, mayhap, to — water! what's that for?

Carr. For one of the Gentle-people to wash her
 Mouth afore she yeats the Brath.

[Enter Dorcas with her Cap in her Hand.]

Dor. Mother, where's my flax Shift and t'other
 Cap, and my Knot, and Check Apron? Father!
 will you grease my Shoes? The Gentle-people will
 call for me when they come back.

Cart. Ai, Wench, that I will. Where's the
 Hog's-Lard. Look her clean Smock, *Carrotty*.
 And take the Mane Comb and stroak her Hair a
 bit; and then she'll look as buxom as the best of
 them. *[Going.]* But stay, *Dorcas*; a Word or
 two of *Vice* will do you no Harm. When you get
 to the Hall — don't let the waiting Men finger
 your Geer. For if you do — you'll come to no
 good. Say, I said so.

Dor. O, lud! There's nobody will meddle with
 me, I warn't.

Cart. Ah! — you're mistaken, hussy. You
 are young and plump, and may make somebody's
 Chaps

Chaps Water. *Your's as good as my Lady in the Dark.*

Dor. Ai, — but I be Dorcas, Father.

Car. Its all one. So mind the old Song.

[Sings, in the Tune of over the Water.

When Maidens inspir'd by Nature give way,
To kissing and billing in Private;
And suffer the Men with their Bubbies to play,
And hinder no Action they drive at: *[Sings,*
From one Thing to to'ther — they'll quickly Ad-
And lay you as flat as a Flounder,

And learn you an old-fashion'd Country Dance]

That'll soon make you rounder and rounder:

Then Dorcas beware, how you toy with the Men,
On trust to their artful Delusion:

They'll swear that they love you, — agen and agen;

To bring your Resolves to Confusion.

Your Grandmother's Blessing, and pithy Advice,
Lay up in your Bosom together;

Be Modest, good-natur'd, clean, careful and nice;

And tie your two Ties in a Toether. *[Exit.]*

The End of the Second Act.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Lady Nice's House.

Lady Nice dressed, and Sumwell.

Lady. **T**HIS Story of your Nephew's is very
Extraordinary, indeed; Mr. Sumwell.

He'll come and drink Tea with us, won't he?

Sum. Yes, Madam. He's here already.

Enter Worthy, richly dressed.

Wor. Madam, I'm your Ladyship's most obedient, humble Servant. I need no Intimation, tho' a Stranger, to tell me you are Regent here. your august Air and illustrious Presence declare it indubitably.

Lady. You are Welcome to *England*, Sir; but more particularly so, here. Pray, Sir, sit down. [*They all sit.*] Mr. *Sumwell* has given me a Detail of your extraordinary Merit and good Fortune in that distant Part of the World from whence you are just arrived.

Wor. I am greatly obliged to my Uncle, Madam, for shewing my Picture in so favourable a Light, but your Ladyship must abate for his Indulgence, now you see the Original.

Lady. Indeed, he has done you some Injustice, but it is owing to his Modesty; he has not drawn you quite Strong enough. His Description is wanting of the generous, easy, manly Deportment you have brought with you.

Wor. This — from a Lady of your Discernment, Madam, will overturn the Mediocrity of my Inclinations, and make me Vain; notwithstanding I have always endeavoured to intermingle a large Portion of Philosophy with my most exalted Interests; and thereby learnt the Knowledge of myself.

Lady. A just Way of thinking, Sir, is the ready Road to true Greatness. The Honours you have acquired in the *Indies*, were not conferred without desert, I presume. It appears, Sir, — you have something to be vain on.

Wor. Fancy — Madam, is very predominant in some great Personages. The King of *Hibb* liked me at first Sight, and hastily preferred me,
F without

without considering my Merit, or observing my Defects. Report — indeed, had said something in my Favour. This Prince's Characteristic and mine, happened to be exactly similar, and begat the greatest Intimacy and Friendship that could possibly exist, between two Persons of the same Sex.

Lady. Pray, Sir, may that Peculiarity be known?

Wor. O, 'twas a Trifle, Madam; — nothing worth your Ladyship's hearing or notice.

Lady. No Trifle would engage two Persons of such an Eminence and Taste; and provided, you suffer no Disadvantage by it, I should be glad to know it. I love Learning and Philosophy, tho' I'm Mistress but of little.

Wor. O, Madam, 'twas nothing so noble. 'Twas an effeminate Business, of mean Consideration with the Universality. A Gift of a low but particular Nature, and what I am really ashamed to name.

Sum. O, dear, what straining is here, to bring out the Word *Niteness*.

Lady. No wonder, Mr. *Sumwell*. 'Tis a Word of large Import; an Accomplishment, Sir, that the World must envy and esteem you for.

Sum. I suppose the *Indian* King thought so, Madam; or else he would hardly have given my Nephew a Principality for it.

Lady. A Principality! I doubt I am faulty in Decorum. Pray, Mr. *Sumwell*, inform me of your Nephew's Dignity, that I may be in a Capacity of giving him his true Title.

Wor. Plain *Worthy* — at your Ladyship's Service. Titles conferred on *Englisemen* Abroad, have no Currency here.

Lady. You'll let me call you Lord, I hope, Sir.

Wor. I can't answer to it, Madam. It violates my Modesty. When I'm Abroad — on my own Estate, I can't avoid it; but decline it here.

Lady.

Lady. Pray, Sir, how do you do for Servants, agreeable to your good Taste? I am plagued to death, only in the Way of common Decency.

Wor. The Kingdom of *Hibill* abounds with good Servants, Madam, that are mighty docible, and easily instructed. But since my coming to *England*, I have had fourteen Valets in a Week, and sixteen Cooks in a Fortnight: And am at this present Moment without one Sloven, Slattern, or Slut in my Family. I dismissed 'em all but Yesterday Morning: Took a Chaise the same Hour, and came post like a private Person, to pay my Duty to my Uncle, and Devoirs to your Ladyship.

Lady. Exactly my Case. The King of *Hibill* and your Lordship are not more alike. But I doubt you'll be starved here, for want of them. I have nobody, neither, but a raw Girl and a quondam Cook, that is married to one of my Tenants, and comes upon such Emergencies to help us out.

Wor. Your Ladyship is very good. I am always in much greater Fear of poisoning than starving, Madam. I care not how little I eat, so it be but clean. And had rather——even, Cook for myself, or do any thing else, than be *fluttishly* served. I am very particular, to besure; and it is a Fault, but I can't help it. I can't use my Water 'till it is strained thro' a Sponge: Your Ladyship would be surprized to see what Quantities of Filth are mixed with that useful Fluid: It abounds with stony Concretions, that breed the Gravel; with Worms, Frogs, Toads, Snakes, Rats, Mud, and a thousand other nasty Things that we must swallow of Course, if we drink it crude. I wash all my Wheat in twenty prepared Waters, before I send it to the Mill, and can scarce make it clean with all my Precaution: There are Smuts, dead Corns, Cockle-seed, Catleek and Thistles; besides

an hundred Nastinesses from the Shoes, Persons and Food of the Threshers, that other People grind into their Flour, to poison the Staff of Life.

Lady. O *Jupiter*! You have given Birth to a Thought that otherwise might have slept for ever. Water and Flour are the common Parents of all we eat and drink, and must be vastly unwholesome 'till purified by your Method, Sir.

Wor. I have all my Meat washed three Times over with a Sponge dipp'd in Lavender-Water, to purify it from the Sweat of the Butcher's Hands, and the Dust of their nasty Trays. And I parboil every Kind of hollow Food, as Fowls, Geese, Turkeys, and so forth, in an acid Liquor prepared on purpose, to cleanse and sweeten their Insides, that abound with Impurities innumerable.

Lady. And an excellent Way, too. I have been famous for some Things in this Manner, myself; but you exceed me, as much as the Sun does the Moon.

Wor. Your Ladyship is pleas'd to compliment me. But what I have told you is nothing to the Niceness of my royal Friend at *Hibill*. Rice—— is reckoned the Staff of Life there, as Wheat is here. That—— he has picked, Corn by Corn, by a Set of beautiful young Virgins, kept for that Purpose, after having bathed themselves in Rose-Water, and been perfumed with the Essence of Violets; who are directed to throw away every Grain that is broken or bit by Insects.

Lady. That must be mighty tedious, Sir.

Wor. Not at all, Madam; he has People enough, and they are all ambitious of serving their Sovereign. His Salt and his Gunpowder is separated Corn by Corn in the same Manner.

Lady. What makes him so nice in his Gunpowder, Sir?

Wor.

Wor. That's Part of his Diet, Madam. Gun-powder steeped in Brandy, is as fashionable a Breakfast there, as Tea is here. He seldom omits the Use of it twice a Day.

Lady. That Climate may require it, perhaps. Had this King never a Daughter, nor Sister of the same Taste, to cement the Bonds of Friendship between you, by a double Obligation, Sir?

Wor. Yes, Madam; he has a Daughter, whom I had the Honour and Felicity to bring to England; with a Commission from her royal Father to provide for her Education; and if afterwards I approved of her, for a Wife, I had full Power given me to marry her, and draw upon his high Treasurer for Five Millions — of their Money, in the Name of a Portion.

Lady. Five Millions! Bless me, that must be a prodigious Sum, let their Money be what it will. And pray, Sir, where is the Lady, now?

Wor. She's on the Road, Madam. I expect her at my Uncle Ford's, every Hour. For as I am extremely Fond of her, and can't possibly live two Days without seeing her, I sent an Express from the first Stage, for her to follow me immediately, hither; where I think to consummate my Nuptials, and reap the ripened Harvest of my Care. I hope your good Ladyship will condescend to grace us with your Presence.

Lady. I shall be proud of doing myself so great an Honour, Sir. If there should not be Room enough at Mr. Ford's, my old House is at your Lordship's Service.

Wor. Your Ladyship is extreamly obliging, and brings me deeply into Debt. This Ring — is a Trifle I'll pledge for the Payment. [Puts a Ring on her Finger.

Lady.

Lady. This is a Politeness I don't understand. Please to receive it again, Sir, as a Pledge of my good Will and your own Welcome.

Wor. No, Madam; I protest, I'll have it no more. I have several of the same Sort. That— was worn by my royal Friend himself, who ordered me — if ever I parted with it, to bestow it on one of the nicest Ladies in my own Country.

Lady. Then, it cannot belong to me —

Wor. It shall rest there — with your Ladyship's Leave, till I find a worthier Woman to wear it.

Lady. Well, Sir — it shall be ready — whenever you please to call for it. But this Incident has put off a much more agreeable Subject. We were talking about the Princess.

Wor. 'Tis very true, Madam. And a most agreeable Subject it is, to me; for she has all the Niceness of her Father, the Beauty of her Mother, and the angelic Air and Politeness of your Ladyship.

Lady. O! Sir —

Enter Mrs. Subtle. [*They all rise.*]

Mrs. Subtle, your Servant. Come, pray sit down.

Sub. Gentlemen — Sir — I'm [*Sumwell gives Subtle a Chair.*] ashamed to keep you standing.

Wor. Your most obedient, Madam.

Sub. I've a Note for you Ladyship. [*Gives her a Note.*] I didn't know Lady Nice had Company.

Sum. This is my Nephew, from Abroad, Madam. You have heard me mention my Kinsman *Worthy.*

Sub. O, yes Sir, often. You're welcome to England, Sir.

Wor. I thank you, Madam.

Lady.

Lady. I must beg your Lordship's Pardon —
I've a little Affair that demands my Attention.

[*Exit with Mrs. Subtle.*]

Wor. Your Ladyship's most obedient. Well,
Sir, how have I acted my Part?

Sum. O, to a Miracle. Your Lordship is very
deserving of your Principality. You've no dislike
to the Lady, I hope, now you've seen her.

Wor. O, quite the Reverse, Sir. Her Person,
good Sense and Behaviour, have charmed me.
But what Method must I take to charm her? This
Princess — seems rather to bar than bless my
Hopes, here.

Sum. Come, we'll go and settle that in another
Place, lest, we are disturbed in this. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. A Field.

Ailce calling after Allwit.

Ailce. Sir! Squire! Squire!

Allw. Ha! My pretty Wood-Nymph! My little
Dryad!

Ailce. Yes, Sir. I've got on my Mother's Hol-
land Smock, and its dry enough; 'twas well aired
afore it was laid up, last Summer. [*Strips up her
Gown Sleeves.*]

Allw. That's well, my *Galatea*; and where was
you going?

Ailce. I was galloping to the Parson's, to look
for your Honour. I am ready to be *interlined* now,
as soon as your Worship pleases.

Allw. Be'st' — my little Charmer? Come,
then, give me a Kiss, and I'll proceed with thee
immediately.

Ailce. There, then. [*Kisses him.*]

Allw.

Allw. 'Tis Nestled by Jove! You must give me another. [*Kisses*] and another. [*Kisses*] An odd Number they say, is lucky.

Ailce. How many is that, Sir? I'd have it be lucky.

Allw. Nine, my pretty Innocent.

Ailce. O, Sir, you shall have Nineteen, if that will make it lucky. [*Kisses him again.*] You smell deadly sweet, o'er Father. Ha'n't you a Posy about you?

Allw. No, my rural Goddess. 'Tis the natural Scent of my Body. I always smell so.

Ailce. Then you're a deadly sweet Man — Squire, I mean.

Allw. Could you like to have such a sweet Man for your Bedfellow, my dear?

Ailce. Yes, I love sweet Things, *hugously*.

Allw. Then you and I will be Bedfellows, my Charmer.

Ailce. But what will my *Laady* say; to be sure she'll like to ha' you herself.

Allw. She don't like a Man Bedfellow: Widows never do.

Ailce. Nor I neither; mayhap, now I think on't; for I never lay with a Man in my Life: I always lye with our *Nan*.

Allw. No! Never lye with a Man?

Ailce. No, only *Cladpole* one Morning got in between *Nan* and I; but I didn't like him to be there, he smelt so of the Horses. So I got up and went to Milking.

Allw. And left them together.

Ailce. Ai, marry did I; there wasn't Room enough for us all, unless we had lien one o'top of to'ther.

Allw. Well, you and I will have a Bed to ourselves, and lye in one another's Arms, my Dove.

Ailce.

Ailce. O dear, how can that be? My Arms a'n't long enough to come round you, I believe. [*Embraces him*] Yes, they be. But won't you forget to call me up in a Morning; I am deadly apt to over sleep myself, only Nan gi's me a Hunch with her great —— but End. [*Mimicks her.*]

Allw. I sha'n't let you do that. I shall wake you, never fear.

Ailce. Come, then, Squire, let us go to my *Laady's*. I long to be *interlined*.

Allw. I must have Nineteen more Kisses; and then, we *will* go.

Ailce. O, I'll give you Twenty, an' that be all. [*Kisses him again.*]

Allw. But you must not kiss any one else, *Ailce.*

Ailce. What! not if they smell as sweet as you?

Allw. No, my dear, you must save all your Kisses for me.

Ailce. O, then you're to be my Husband, I suppose, ar'n't you? Father says, —— Mother should kiss nobody but him.

Allw. Very true.

Ailce. But *mayn't* we be married, too?

Allw. Yes, after we have lain together a little While, and like —— one another.

Ailce. I shall like you, I'm sure, if you can but like me.

Allw. Nobody can dislike so young, so innocent and good-natured a Creature as thou art. [*kisses her.*] The fragrant-Moisture on thy coral Lips, is like the Honey-dew Drops that fall from Heaven in a Summer's Morning.

Ailce. You mean *May Dew*, to make Beauty-Wash on; I have gathered it often.

Allw. You did not want it, my pretty Shepherdess. Nothing can made you fairer, or fresher. Here's no *Carmin*; no *Spanish Red*; but genuin^e,

wholesome, *English* Flesh and Blood, just Ripe and ready for the Reaper's Hand.

Ailce. Why, can you Reap, Squire?

Allw. Yes, my dear; such a Harvest as yours.

Ailce. Adod, it will hold you tug, Sir. It will make you *Swoot*; for we have a Deal of Corn. But what *argusses* talking about that? — Let us go to my *Laady's*.

Allw. 'Tis too soon yet, my pretty Primrose. She's at the Parson's, and won't come away this half Hour. Let us go and sit down by the Side of the Wood, and wait for her coming; we shall see her go by.

Ailce. Well, we will then, for I love to lye in the Shade,
[*Exeunt. Arm in Arm.*]

SCENE III. *A Parlour.*

Lady Nice and Mrs. Subtle.

Lady. Don't you think Mr. *Worthy* a charming Man, my dear?

Sub. His Outside, Madam, promises well; but Words win me.

Lady. O! you'd have been raptured with his Words. He speaks like an Angel, or a God. He's the nicest Man in the World; and I am the wretchedest Woman.

Sub. How so, Madam?

Lady. O, my dear *Subtle*, of all Mankind — he seems to be my With. He's learned, polite; has travelled, and is Rich. Nay, he's a Prince! and the only Favourite of the King of *Hibill*.

Sub. Struck thro' the Heart, as I live! Sure, this is the God of Love himself, that could make such a sudden Impression.

Lady,

Lady. You know my Passions are all violent. I can't help it.

Sub. Why then you shall have him. I'll speak for you myself. His Uncle and I, can bring it about.

Lady. O, impossible! his Heart is engaged! he's going to be married! married to a Princess! even To-Day! directly! his Passion's so great he won't stay an Hour, perhaps.

Sub. Here's passionate Doings! indeed. But which has wounded your Ladyship most? the Man on the Money? his Nicety or his Principality?

Lady. O, the Man! the Man! I don't value Riches or Honour; you know that. The Lady he loves——will be here, instantly.

Sub. Here! how do you think to entertain her, without Servants? this is a new Embarrassment.

Lady. O, the Lady and Servants and every thing else but the Man, may go to the Devil! I'm out of my Senses.

Sub. I think so too. And am sorry for it. But were you less violent, some Remedy might be thought of, to relieve you. The Prince is not married yet; and many Things happen between the Cup and the Lip. There's no Law against stealing a Man; we'll carry him away by Force, and keep him at short Allowance 'till we make him consent to marry you.

Lady. I've too little Patience and too much Affection to be diverted with airy Schemes. His Consent is not to be obtained. His Passion's as violent as mine, and will be permanent.

Sub. If his Passion for the Princess is as violent as your Ladyship's, it *will not* be permanent. For violent Passions never last long. They are too hot to hold; and you have Hopes still.

Lady. But when he's married ——— he's gone! lost for ever! and the Decay of his Passion then, can be no Relief to me.

Sub. Marriages are not to be managed now, as they were formerly: The Parliament have made it a Business of Time, where the Parties are both Strangers. 'Tis a Sign he has been Abroad, or else he would have known better. He can't have a Licence to be married here, 'till he has been a Month in the Parish. And in that Time 'tis possible to overturn twenty such Passions.

Lady. That's some Relief, indeed; but it can't be lasting. His Love is of long standing, and every Day grows warmer and warmer.

Sub. If the Princess does us the Honour to come hither, I shall find a Way to make her uneasy. She's hardly Proof against Jealousy. Lovers are Tinder——and take with a Touch. The least Spark kindles a Flame that consumes those that cherish it. The Object of his Wishes shall give him Disgust. I'll make her peevish and ill-natur'd; and shew the happy Hero, 'that, the brightest amongst the Sex have their dark Sides as well as the Men.

Lady. That will be ungenerous, and against my Nature. A Breach of Honesty and Hospitality.

Sub. Stratagems in Love and War,——are not only necessary but warrantable.

Lady. Baseness——is Baseness in both, and can never be warrantable in either.

Sub. Then, be just, and die.

Lady. 'Tis better to die than be guilty of Villainy. It would always be uppermost in my Mind, that I had ruined by Artifice the happiest Pair. Is it not Robbery? Certainly it is. To steal a Man's Heart from the Woman he loves, is little less criminal than Murder! I can't do it.

Sub.

Sub. You needn't: I'll do it for you.

Lady. Besides—what Security can I have own Happiness; his Heart, that is extorted the Woman he loves, may prove but an Alien to mine. The Cheat may be discovered, too, and then my Days will be embittered with his Reproaches, for robbing him of a Blessing, I had n't to bestow.

Sub. You must leave it to Time and your better Genius. But how will your Ladyship do for Servants?

Lady. I don't know. Those filthy Farmer's Cubs are not to be formed into rational Creatures under a Twelve-months Drudgery.

Sub. No, nor in that Time neither. They'll require at least an Apprenticeship.

Lady. I must trouble you to send for the Man and the Maid you recommended to me.

Sub. They shall be sent for immediately. But I doubt you have forgot the Tea.

Lady. It's very right.—Come, then. *[Going.]*

[Knocking.] There's somebody knocks. *Will you see who it is?* *[Exit.]*

Sub. Yes, Madam.

[Subtle steps to the Door in the Wing, and returns with Sir William Traffick.]

S. W. Madam, your Servant. Is Lady Nier at Home, pray?

Sub. I can't say, Sir. If you please to walk in and sit down, I'll enquire. May I have the Honour of telling her Ladyship, who wants her, Sir?

S. W. Yes, if you please. I am called Traffick, Madam. Sir William Traffick, by the King's Favour.

Sub. Of ——— where, Sir?

S. W.

S. W. Of London, Madam, I'm a Citizen. May I — in Return, have the Favour of your Name, Madam?

Sub. Yes, Sir. My Name is *Subtle*.

S. W. O, Mrs. *Subtle* — I'm your most [Bows] obedient. You're the very Person I had a Desire to see. I've a small Affair to negotiate with you, that will prove beneficial to both of us.

Sub. With me? Sir *William*.

S. W. Yes, Madam. An Offer — not unworthy your Acceptance, I'll assure you.

Sub. I'm obliged to you, Sir.

S. W. I'm informed, Madam, that Nature has been lavish in your Favour, and bestowed her Ornaments upon you freely; that you are well descended and well-bred; that you are happy in your Friendship — and want nothing on this Side Heaven but one Thing; and that — is in my Power and Will — to bestow.

Sub. Sir, I've no Way deserved these extraordinary Honours, and stand something amazed at your Benevolence.

S. W. 'Tis not a tenth Part, Madam, of what you deserve, nor of what I intend to bestow, if you are favourable to my Petition. Your Gifts are great, and your Virtues innumerable, and deserve an Equivalent. You'll excuse my Manner and want of Eloquence, I hope, I was bred a Citizen.

Sub. A Courtier — rather, Sir *William*, the Informations you have received in my Favour, are prodigiously heightened: And my Gifts — no other than the Issue of your Politeness.

S. W. I find you, Mrs. *Subtle*, in full Possession of every Virtue — Report hath painted to my Credulity; and hope you'll not stand in your own light.

Sub.

Sub. After this elaborate Introduction, Sir *William*, you may now, be a little more open; if you please. I should be glad to know the Honour you design me.

S. W. Why, as I was saying, you know, Madam, that ——— you wanted but one Thing. 'Tis that identical Article I am come to present you with. But, if I thought I should be so unhappy as to incur your Displeasure, or meet a Refusal, I would postpone the Mention of it for ever. Such, is my unalterable Regard for a Lady of your Merit, that I would die in Silence, rather than make a Proposal that can want your Approbation.

Sub. Pray, Sir *William*, let me know my only want ——— for I thought I had many.

S. W. 'Tis Money, [*ckinking a Purse,*] Money, Madam, the Music of the Spheres, Peers, and every body else. Pray feel the Weight of that Purse. [*Gives her a Purse.*]

Sub. Indeed, Sir *William*, I'm not over-burdened with Money: My Father lost too much in the South Sea.

S. W. Very likely I may find it ——— and should be glad to restore it to the Proprietor. That ——— Madam, is Part of it. Pray, put it up; and at better Leisure consider its Marks.

Sub. You are surprizingly obliging, Sir *William*, and have so many winning Ways, that a Woman must be made of Marble that can withstand your tempting Importunities.

S. W. Say you so, my charmer? [*Squeezes her Hand.*]

Sub. I mean in the Way of a modest Request, Sir *William*, no further. I hope you'll put no sinister Construction on a Slip of the Tongue, if I've made one.

S. W. Well, then. Now, to the Matter in hand. Lady *Nice* you know ——— wants a Husband, and

and you want Money. That Purse ——— shall be the Earnest of a Thousand more, if I can by means of your good Offices obtain her for a Wife, You are her second self, and can do more with her in one Hour, than I can do in a Month, perhaps, Women are ruled by one another in these Matters, pretty much.

Sub. I'll assure you, Sir *William*, I thought you had meant the Compliment to myself.

S. W. You richly deserve it, Madam; but we Merchants never do any thing but in the Way of Gain. 'Tis a Maxim we always adhere to.

Sub. I think I must adopt that Maxim too. Well, Sir, Lady *Nice* shall know the Honour you intend her. If you please to walk into that Room ——— Sir *William*, you will find some Pictures to amuse you, in the mean Time.

S. W. Your humble Servant.

[*Exit.*]

Sub. How soon an innocent Woman may be [mistaken!]

Men ——— speak to us in Riddles ———

And leave the Interpretation to ourselves.

I expected ——— to have been a Lady at once :

Pox on him, for an old Devil !

To tantalize me thus ——— with his empty Honour,

And drop me at last,

Is like the ungenerous Treatment of a Miser !

But sweet Revenge ——— poor Woman's last Resort,

Shall pay the Muckworm, double Interest for't.

[*Exit.*]

The End of the Third Act.

A C T

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A Parlour.

Lady Nice, Sir William Traffick, Mrs. Subtle and Worthy, just done Tea. Margaret waiting.

Lady. COME, *Margaret*, remove the Table.
[*Exit Margaret and Tea-Table.*]

S. W. I must send your Ladyship a Set of Servants from *London*, I believe. They are most of them Nice enough there. The Men are all *Beaus*, and the Maids all *Belles*; you must say, *Sir*, to the first, and *Madam*, to the others; or they'll turn up their Noses, and report you ill-bred.

Lady. I thank you, *Sir William*, I shall be in Town soon, and will then furnish myself, with such as are suitable. I would have Servants to be Servants, as they used to be, formerly, and not Masters and Mistresses as we often find them now. I wonder the Parliament does not make a new Law to punish their Pertness.

S. W. I presume, they think the old Ones sufficient, *Madam*.

Lady. How can that be? When a Fellow may be saucy to ones Face, and give opprobrious Language with Impunity?

S. W. Such a One may be turned away.

Lady. Not without Warning — or Wages extraordinary. I'd have such saucy Fellows set in the Stocks; and your fluttish Wenches in a Tub of Water.

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S. W. Your Ladyship's Law would undoubtedly be a good One. Pray, Sir, what News is there stirring? [*To Wortby.*]

Wor. I never read any, Sir.

S. W. Then, you've no concerns Abroad, I presume, Sir.

Wor. A Trifle — Sir.

Lady. O, my Lord, is a Principality a Trifle? The Gentleman's just come from Abroad, Sir *William.*

S. W. You are welcome to *England*, Sir. Pray, from what Part of the Globe did you come last?

Wor. The *Indies*, Sir.

S. W. The East or the West, Sir? I have been at them both.

Wor. The *West Indies*, Sir.

S. W. Pray Sir, what Ship brought you over?

Wor. The *Providence of Bristol*, Sir.

S. W. Odsó! I'm glad of that. I have a Share in her: But have no Advice of her being in Port. Pray Sir, when did you land?

Wor. About a Fortnight ago, Sir.

S. W. A Fortnight ago! blefs me! and I know nothing of it? You must be mistaken, certainly, Sir.

Wor. I believe I am, Sir. I landed at *Bristol*, but the Vessel belonged to another Port.

S. W. O, I wondered. Have you been long in the *Indies*, Sir?

Wor. Yes, Sir.

S. W. In what Part did you live, Sir?

Wor. In all Parts, Sir.

S. W. Ai! I have lived there Seven Years myself, but never saw a fortieth Part of them. You must have travelled very much, for they are very large. You know *Jamaica*, to be sure, Sir.

Wor.

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Wor. Yes, Sir. Slightly. My principal Residence was in the great Island of *California*.

Lady. You forget the Kingdom of *Hibill*, Sir.

Wor. No, Madam, I thank you, the Kingdom of *Hibill* lies in the Heart of *California*.

S. W. The Kingdom of *Hib-Hill*! I believe there are many such Kingdoms in *California*.

Wor. Petty Kingdoms, Sir. But they are all united under one very powerful Monarch.

S. W. Very likely, Sir. I never was there. What are the chief Commodities of that famous Country, Sir?

Wor. Mostly Gold, Sir *William*.

S. W. But what do the Inhabitants trade in, Sir?

Wor. Trade! Those that have Gold enough, want no Trade, Sir. They are all above it.

S. W. 'Tis the first Time I ever heard of Gold in *California*. Their Neighbours of *Mexico* have Silver.

Wor. That's a paultry Metal with us, Sir; we only use it for Bullets, and such base Uses as Lead is used for here.

S. W. I think I have had the Honour of seeing you before, Sir, but can't recollect where.

Wor. I believe not, Sir.

Lady. One Gentleman may be like another, Sir *William*.

Sub. 'Tis impossible to remember every body one sees in *London*; and yet some faint Traces may remain and confuse our Ideas. I mentioned to the Party, Sir *William*, the Stock you had to transfer.

S. W. You did me Honour, Madam. I hope my Proposals were relished.

Enter Allwit.

Allw. Madam, I'm your Ladyship's most obedient humble Servant. Your Doors like the Temple

ple of Honour, being open, I came forwards to the Goddess herself——and make my Prostrations here.

[*Bowing very low and kneeling.*]

Lady. Arise, and tell me your Suit, Mr. *Allwit*.

Allw. O, *Bona Dea*! my Suit is for a Deity. The Contemplation of your Beauty, Madam, at Ninety Miles Distance, attracted me as forcibly as the Earth's Center does a falling Millstone——.

Lady. Bless us! what a ponderous Hyperbole you have brought down upon a poor, weak Woman!

Allw. Sir *William*! by *Jove*, I did not observe you before: nor this Gentleman, upon my Honour, I must beg Pardon. I was so charmed and dazzled with the Effulgence of this Lady, I saw no other Object. Madam, I must resume the Subject, and let your Ladyship know, That, neither regarding the Inclemency of the Weather, nor the Dreariness of Night, I have flown from the Metropolis of *Great Britain* to this happy Spot, without Refreshment or Sleep, to feast my famished Faculties with the Divinity of your illustrious Presence.

Lady. I wish you had came sooner, Sir. We had something a little more substantial at the Tea-Table, just now.

Allw. Superfluous, quite. To behold an Angel is Food celestial. I taste the Sustenance of Gods! and revel upon Sun-beams!

S. W. Upon the Moon's Horns, you mean, Man. Why, Lady *Nice* will think you crazy, Mr. *Allwit*.

Allw. A Pox of your City Breeding, Sir! is this like a Gentleman, to break in upon my first Audience? I hope your Ladyship is well acquainted with the Rudeness of this Tramontane! this Violator of Politeness and Wit. His Fellow, is not to be found in the five Books of *Moses*, nor *Aaron* neither,

Lady.

Lady. By the friendly Freedoms you mutually indulge one another in, it appears your Acquaintance, Gentlemen, is of no new Date.

Allw. I know Sir *William Traffick*, Madam, well; and he knows me. I know something too, of his Business here. But sure——Sir *William*, you ha'n't the Presumption to think of committing Sacrilege, by touching this fair Image. She is too pure and holy for your smoaky Air.

S. W. I hope, she will be wiser ~~and~~ to commit Matrimony with a Man whose Estate is mortgaged to me, his Rival.

Allw. Death! and Furies! —— [*Lays his Hand on his Sword.*]

Lady. So, then, I've a Pair of Lovers, and did not know it. Mrs. *Subtle*, which shall I chuse?

Sub. The Man with the Money for me, Madam; I love something to make the Pot boil. Powder will blow away; and Perfumes evaporate.

Allw. For this Indignity —— rude Knight, I must see you elsewhere. I am cautious of prophaning the Threshold of this sacred Resplendence.

S. W. You may see me, any where, Sir. I shall be always ready —— to receive the three Year's Interest due last Quarter.

Allw. Why, you Jew! Will nothing satiate, but my eternal Confusion! I'll speak with you this Minute. [*Going.*]

Lady. Mr. *Worthy*, pray Interpose, and make them Friends again. I would not have Murder committed here, for the Universe.

Wor. The Danger of that, is little, Madam. Sir *William* has more Prudence than to accept of a Challenge; and the other Gentleman more good Sense than to give one, and fright a Lady.

Allw. Sir, you're a Gentleman of the first Altitude, and the Profundity of Ratiocination. 'Tis in

in regard to the Lady, that he now Trembles in a whole Skin; for otherwise, I had pinked him thro' the Body, before this Time. Madam, I owe such Reverence and Devotion to that Shrine of Beauty you are pleased to animate, that no Temptation, save your own indisputable Commands, should make me guilty of the least Rusticity or Discomposure. I'm now Calm. Sir William —— we'll settle it —— over a Bottle.

S. W. I ~~shall~~ leave it to my Lawyer, Sir.

Enter Ailce.

Ailce. Well, Squire, have you spoke for me? I hadn't Patience to stay without any longer.

Lady. Who's this, Mr. Allwit?

Ailce. O, Mistress! Don't you know poor Ailce, Farmer Dungwell's Daughter? Squire, here, —— promised to shew me the Lady; but you can do it, now, I suppose.

Lady. That Gentlewoman, can, I believe.

Sub. Yes, Child, come along with me. ——

[*Subtle bands Ailce to the End of the Stage, and returns to Lady Nice, curtesying very respectfully.*]

With your Ladyship's Leave, I make bold to introduce to your Prefence, the celebrated Miss Dungwell.

Ailce. [*Pulling back.*] No, no; this i'n't my Lady. This is her —— that Father brought into our House, along with you. What! didn't I fetch the Pot, for one of you both? Come, Squire, shew me the Lady herself, as you promised me, [*Attempts to lay hold of him*] and I'll give you the twenty Kisses, I promised you.

Lady. O, fie, Miss, —— Sure you don't kiss Men.

Ailce.

Ailce. I am, no Miss. — I'm only *Ailce*.

Allw. This is my Lady — young Woman.

Ailce. Young Woman, indeed! How *strange* you are to a Body, now? You called me better Names in the Wood; and said, I should be your Bedfellow, and all that. If this is my Lady, I'll tell you, Mistress, how it was.

Allw. The Girl's a Fool, sure. 'Twill degrade your Divinity, my angelic Fair, to hear the Simplicity of this Mushroom. She's an Idiot — and took me for a Baby, and would kiss me. — Her Doll — I believe, for she wanted to undress me.

Ailce. O lud! O lud! O lud! He's the greatest Liar — for all he's a Squire, that ever spoke Truth with a Tongue. He undress'd himself — a'most, and me too. And if you say much more, I'll tell all the rest.

Lady. No, No! We'll hear no more. I doubt you have abused this young Creature. Mr. *Allwit*.

Allw. By the Perfection of your Ladyship's Beauty, not I. She followed me like a lost Kitten, and enquired for your Ladyship's House. —

Sub. So, you took her up in your Arms — and brought her hither.

Allw. She came after me, Madam, at a small Distance.

Ailce. That's another Swinger, — for I came along with him. He wanted to have me follow him at a Distance, after he had done — what he would — with me, but I wou'd not be served so, for fear he should fail me, and not shew me the Lady, at last.

Lady. As it happens, Child, you are come to the Speech of the Person, you want; so, let me know your Business.

Ailce.

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Ailce. Why, Father said, you wanted a Maid, Mistrefs; and that I mun dress your *Vittel*, and wash for you, and all that.

Lady. Mr. *Wortby*, pray let me have your Opinion of this young Woman for a Cook.

Wor. If your Ladyship should want a Nurse some ten Months hence, I believe this Gentleman has qualified her to serve in that Station with much more Ability than in the other.

Allw. By *Juno*! that's right. Her Ladyship's Interest is the *Primum Mobile* of all my Atchievements.

Sub. O, you Devil! You don't confess, sure. Come, *Ailce*, and tell us what he — said, to seduce you.

Ailce. Why, he said, we should be married, after we had lyen together a little, and liked one another. And he gin me this half Crown, to pay for mending my Mother's *Holland Smock*.——

Wor. And buy Baby-Clouts.

S. W. The Pretensions of Mr. *Allwit* being immersed in the Charms of Miss *Dungwell*, a Passage is open for the rest of your Ladyship's Admirers; amongst whom I've the Honour to be one. For believe me, Madam, tho' this is my first Address, I have nourished a Passion for your innumerable Virtues, Beauties, and Graces, a considerable While.

Lady. Were my Intentions bent towards a second Marriage, Sir *William*, I should readily Consent to the Honour you offer; but I think to remain a sorrowful Relict.

S. W. This Gentleman——I presume, has some Reason to think otherwise.

Lady. O, he's a married Man, or will be so, soon. His Bride's at hand.

S. W.

S. W. In your Ladyship's Cloaths? —

Lady. No, upon my Honour, you're widely mistaken, Sir *William*, she's a Foreigner — a Lady of Birth, and Princess of *Hibill*.

Wor. You'll have no Impediment upon my Account, Sir *William*, I'm too firmly engaged.

S. W. I hope your Ladyship has made no Vow of Widowhood; but if you have — 'tis no uncommon Practice to besiege and batter a fine Woman out of so unnatural a Resolution. Therefore I hope you'll pardon my Presumption in persevering to address you. My Sufferings, tho' silent, have not been few.

Lady. I'm sensible of your extraordinary Merit, Sir *William*, and am sorry I can't make a suitable Return.

Alto. Pray, Sir *William*, who told you, that my Pretensions to this Lady were at an End? The World shall sooner be at an End! I wou'd n't forego this Queen of Beauty for the Universe. Madam, I have refused the Favours of a Dutche's Dowager to come and bask in the Sunshine of your transcendent Brightness; denied the Solicitations of two Countesses, to make a Tender of my Heart to your Ladyship. Then smile and cheer your wounded Admirer, who, otherwise — will be the wretchedest Mortal that Crawls upon the Earth. O, Goddess! hear my Vow, and grant me my Petition: By Heaven and your more illuminated Self, I swear, vow and protest, that, unless you consent to make me Happy, directly — either by Promise or Performance, I'll incontinently die — a Virgin, and deprive Mankind of all their Hopes of seeing Issue from the *Alto's*.

S. W. You forget your Negotiations with this young Lady, Sir. The Man that sows Seeds in a

Dunghill, has hard Luck if he can't gather Pumpkins.

Alto. Dare you provoke me, again! [*Draws.*] Have at your Heart, Muckworm.

Lady. O! [*Sir William draws—— and they fight awkwardly.*]

[*Exeant Lady Nice, Subtle, Worthy and Ailce.*]

Alto. Hold, hold, Sir William, [*Retiring.*] the Lady's stolen.

S. W. You've raised my Indignation, and I'll not hold now. [*Follows him slowly about the Stage.*]

Alto. But you're a Man of Peace, and should not draw the Sword.

S. W. Yes, the Sword of Justice. Besides, I'm a Knight.

Alto. So am I a Beau, and may draw my Sword too, but not to kill Folks. City Knights don't use to fight. Well, if you will Murder me, do, [*Throws down his Sword.*] I'm unarmed, you see, and not able to defend myself.

S. W. Well, I'll unarm too, [*Puts up his Sword.*] and give you the Discipline you deserve with my Cane. [*Runs after him with his Cane.*]

Alto. O, Sir William! Sir William! Consider my Cloaths. The End of your Cane may be dirty! The Ferrel ragged——and fetch Blood! The Man's Mad sure. I'll stay——no longer. [*Exit.*]

S. W. Then you shall run for it. [*Exit after him.*]

Re-enter Lady Nice and Worthy, at another Part of the Stage.

Wor. I hope your Ladyship is not much frightened.

Lady. No, Sir; I'm not so faint-hearted. I only made use of that favourable Opportunity to get rid of such troublesome Visitors. Your Lordship

ship will be so good, I hope, as to overlook the disagreeable Entertainment you've been encumbered with, here.

—*Wor.* Nothing can long be disagreeable where your Ladyship is present: The forcible Influence of your innumerable Charms, like the ascending Sun, dispel the foggy Vapours that dodge and dance about your powerful Sphere.

Lady. O, Mr. *Worthy*! This is Gallant, indeed. 'Tis well the Princess is not within hearing.

Wor. The Princess, Madam, has many Charms, and has long been a Miracle in my Esteem; but the superior Accomplishments and striking Excellences of your Ladyship, have something abated the Ardour of my Adoration.

Lady. O, you Inconstant! She shall know your Fickleness.

Wor. I hope I shall never deserve that Character, Madam, but can any Man with his Eyes open, see a Brilliant and a Bristol Stone, and not discover the Difference? A Lover may be true and indulgent without being partial and bigotted. The Princess's foreign Air, broken *English* and strange Religion are Imperfections that lessen my Approbation, tho' not my Gratitude. I Reverence her royal Father for his Likeness to myself, and love his Daughter for her love to me.

Lady. 'Tis truly generous and heroic. — You see no Imperfections in me I suppose.

Wor. No, Madam; I can't say I do. There's something so irresistably engaging in your Ladyship's Person and Behaviour, and something so similar to the Sentiments of myself, that had I never seen the Princess of *Hibill*, and was the greatest Monarch upon Earth, I should rather lose one half of my Dominions, than not have you, to share one half of my Throne.

Lady. So, then. — I have flown from a couple of Lovers, to be caught in the Toil of a single One.

Wor. No, Madam. — To be your Lover — would wound my Honour, the Princes's Heart and your Fame. The pathetic Expressions I have accidentally let fall, are only naked Sentiments of my Esteem, and I can't forbear repeating — that were I at perfect Liberty, your Ladyship would be the first Woman in the World, I should wish to spend my Days with.

Lady. Sir — in return for your Complement, I won't disguise the Language of my Heart, but freely own — that were Things circumstanced as you have mentioned, I should not have the Power to deny a Wish so generous and noble.

Wor. Should such an Opportunity ever present itself — your Ladyship's Memory would not betray you, I hope.

Lady. No, I believe not. I should Remember what you have said to me.

Wor. And what you have said to me.

Lady. The Sense of it, very likely. But let us talk no more of it, now. Things at that Distance look so Diminutive, they tire the Sight, and deceive the Intellects.

Wor. Very true. But as I can have no other Consolation now, your Ladyship may promise me that.

Lady. What, Sir?

Wor. That, if my Princess should die, and your Ladyship be then, single, you'll not deny me the Honour you just now encouraged me to hope for.

Lady. O, I may do that, I believe, very safely, Sir.

Wor. Permit me to seal the Contract, and I ask no more.

[Kisses her Hand.

Enter

Enter Mrs. Subtle.

Sub. Mr. Worby — your Uncle has just received something of Importance by an Express, and desires to see you as soon as possible.

Wor. O, my Heart bounds for Joy! My Princess, my Princess, Ladies, is arrived, I hope. That, I presume, is the important Part of his Dispatches. Your Ladyship's Goodness will pardon my Departure. *[Exit.]*

Lady. My Heart goes pit-a-pat, lest it should be true. You saw nothing of her, I hope.

Sub. No, Madam.

Lady. Nor I hope never will. Dear! What's the Matter with me? I'm extremely Ill. *[Sits down.]* Lend me your smelling Bottle. *[Smells.]*

Sub. How is your Ladyship, now?

Lady. Better, I thank you. *[Arises.]*

Sub. It's only Vapours. The Approach of a Rival will bring the Vapours at any Time.

Lady. To set my Mind upon a Man that 'tis impossible to obtain, is mere Madness or Infatuation; and yet I can't help it. Nay — I have been weak enough but just now, to promise him myself, should Death or Cross-Stars remove the Princess out of the Way: For the Inconstant couldn't forbear to make me a Declaration of his Passion, the first convenient Opportunity he had.

Sub. So, so; you both made good Use of the little Time you had.

Lady. Nay, it was only in answer to a Complement. You can't think me in earnest, sure.

Sub. No, no. — Earnest! No. Lovers never promise any Thing in earnest. I'm glad to hear the Swain is smitten, however.

Lady. 'Tis only a Piece of Gallantry that some Gentlemen think due to every Woman they are alone

alone with; and often serves——but to fill up the Void of Discourse that naturally happens to all *Englishman*, whose Elocution keeps pace with their Understandings. But what is become of the two Combatants, pray?

Sub. Parson *Johnson* is trying to make them Friends, Madam. He came in——and stopped the Pursuit in the Opportunity of Opportunity, as *Fuller* says, or else poor *Allwit*, who was unarmed, must have gone to the Dogs.

Lady. To the Worms, you mean.

Sub. No, Madam, Sir *William* was only caning the Beau round the Kennel.

Lady. O, fie! That was unpolite, indeed. I am glad Mr. *Johnson* was at hand, to be the Pacificator.

Sub. I ordered *Margaret* to set Wine before them, that they may drink and be Friends.

Lady. I should be glad to be handsomely rid of them.

Sub. No, not yet. I have a Project to execute, first. Sir *William* has offered me a Thousand Pounds to prevail with your Ladyship to marry him. Are you willing? Or must I lose the Money?

Lady. Ha! A mercenary Miser! He thinks Money has the same Ascendancy over every one as it has over himself.

Sub. As it is an Affront to us both, we shall do him Injustice——not to revenge it.

Lady. What is your Project, pray?

Sub. 'Tis only in Embrio, yet, Madam. You must favour the Affair and Countenance both their Addressees.

Lady. I had rather be Neuter.——You——may do what you will.

Enter

Enter Dungwell in another Part of the Stage, not seeing the Ladies.

Dung. *Ailce! Ailce!* Where be you? What's nobody *Ailce*? O, Mistress! How fare you? [*To Mrs. Subtle.*] Did you see my Wench? She *cam'd* after the Squire!

Sub. Yes. The Squire and she were both here, just now. He makes Love to her.

Dung. No, no, not he. He's a Wag, and an Arch-Wag too. He threatens *strange* Things to my *Laady*, if ever he comes *athurt* her. Well, but where's *Ailce*, tho' ha? Has she been *interlined* yet, to your Madam, young Woman?

Sub. Indeed Farmer, I can't tell. That's *Lady Nice*, you may ask her.

Dung. Ail! — Is this my *Laady*? Then, I'm your Servant, Mistress. I didn't know you, Landlady, i'faith. Well, how do you *liken* our Wench? She's a mortal good one at making of Blood-Puddings and *Pork-poy*.

Lady. She's above my Place, Farmer; the Squire has promised her Marriage; and she'll be a *Lady* herself.

Dung. Od! I'm glad of that. I'll be no longer a Farmer then. I'll be Father-in-Law to 'em both. Lookye, Landlady, if this be true — I give you *Ware-ning*; you may *vide* yourself of another Tenant as soon as you please. The Squire will make me Lieutenant Corporal of the Javelin-Men at the *Sizes*; and perhaps, one of the Jurymen too, as I'm fit for the Place; for I know the *Planter* from the *Fender*, and that's more than many of them do, I can tell you but that. But I long to see *Ailce* tho', and wish her *Jy*.

Sub. Why, you wou'dn't disturb 'em! The Squire and she are got to Bed together by this Time.

Dung.

Dung. No, faith; I wou'd n't spoil Sport, you know Mistress. Well, *Alice* will give him as good as he brings, never fear. But, now, I think on't — was n't they married first?

Sub. I don't know; but the Parson can tell; he's in the next Room; let's go and ask him.

Dung. Ai, come then. Landlady — farewell to you. [Exit with Subtle.

Enter Worthy with a Letter.

Wor. O, Lady, pity the most forlorn of human Kind!

Lady. What is the Matter, Sir? Is the Princess dead?

Wor. Were that the worst on't, Madam, — I should suffer a lighter Load of Sorrow and Affliction; but, O! — I can declare no further. [Gives her the Letter.]

This speechless Missionary best can shew,
The mournful, rending, galling Grief it brings.

Lady [Reads.]

S I R,

" I AM sorry to send you a Piece of News,
" that I fear will break your Heart. The
" Princess of *Hibill*, O fatal Inconstancy! Is
" seduced and carried off by the Captain of
" the Ship that brought you both to *England*,
" who has since married her, and having a fair
" Wind, they set Sail the same Hour for her Fa-
" ther's Dominions. I hope you will Endeavour
" to support yourself under this Misfortune, and
" think a fickle worthless Woman, unworthy your
" Concern. I am, S I R,

Your sincere Friend,

And humble Servant,

CHARLES HEARTY."

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The Woman that can do this — hath neither Virtue nor Honour; and is, indeed, unworthy your Concern.

Wor. O! I could fall upon my Sword for Madness, to think the treacherous Villain that seduced her, is past the Reach of my red hot Revenge!

[Draws his Sword.]

Lady. Lord! Sir. What are you going to do?

[Holds his Arm.]

Wor. I don't know *[Throws it down.]* I was n't myself. But the Divinity of your angelic Touch has infused new Reason to my wandering Mind. O! hold me longer, and I shall be well.

Lady. I shall willingly contribute any Thing in my poor Power, for your Restoration, Sir.

Wor. How shall I retaliate your Ladyship's Goodness! If there's a Cure for a Case like mine, 'tis you — that must dispense it. You — that before I dreamt of my Condition, had bent my Constancy and made it feeble. *[Kisses her Hand.]*

Lady. You now, make me blush — and recollect with some Disorder, the inconsiderate Promise you extorted from me, then.

Wor. 'Twas honest, open, generous and noble. And what I hope, you'll ne'er repent, nor fly from.

Lady. I fear, Sir, the Easiness of my Behaviour, which you something unfairly took the Advantage of, was the Basis on which you built the Lady's Flight.

Wor. Sure, it is impossible — a Breast so pure, Should hatch or harbour such a Thought!

Lady. I wou'dn't be imposed on, Mr. *Worthy*, or surprized into any Thing the World may condemn me of Weakness for, hereafter. If there is any Mystery in your Affairs, Sir, be bold and let

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me know it; and your Sincerity shall be no Sufferer for your Generosity.

Wor. What can give your Ladyship Foundation for such a Surmise?

Lady. The Foundation is no deeper laid than your quick Transition from the Princess to me, and the circumstantial Manner in which you exacted my Promise, when there appeared not the least Probability of your being at Liberty to want it.

Wor. However Inconsistent or extraordinary my Behaviour has appeared to your Ladyship, I'm entirely innocent of any sinister Design; and when you honoured me with that kind Promise, I did not expect the Misfortune I feel, any more than yourself; and only pressed it from a secret Impulse that irresistably inspired me to love you: But the Hand of Heaven — that best knows our Wants, has directed this Change, to substitute additional Blessings in its Room. And shall I spurn the Vicissitude I can't reverse? No! I'll embrace it with Gratitude! As I do this Pledge, [*Taking her Hand.*] on which I sealed the sacred Contract.

Lady. I hope, Sir, you Remember, that the Proposal you made, in order to obtain that Promise, was subject to a Supposition of your being a Monarch: Now, Sir, if you are really such a Personage, I am ready to fulfill my Engagement, and the vacant Half of your Throne. Otherwise — the Contract's void, and we are both at Liberty.

Wor. Why, did you hold me — from eternal
[Rest!
Why — stay the Arm that would have eas'd me
[soon!
When, there was nothing — nothing! left on
[Earth,
I wish'd to live for, but your lovely Self?

Enter

Enter Mrs. Subtle.

Sub. Your Ladyship will lose all the Diversion yonder's a merry Scene in the back Parlour, between *Dungwell* and his Son-in-Law *Allwit*, *Ailce* and the Parson.

Lady. Their Mirth is unseasonable, Madam, now, — Mr. *Worthby* has lost his Lady, and is inconsolable. The Princess is carried away by a Sea Captain and married.

Wor. It is too true, Mrs. *Subtle*, and I'm on the Brink of Despair.

Sub. What! Because one Monster has married another! They are well paired — so let 'em go. I have no Opinion of Foreigners: They are only fit to be gazed at. What are your *Indian Kings* when they come over here? They are looked on but one Degree above Brutes; and have less Respect shewed them by the Generality, than a smart Footman of our own Nation.

Wor. You must pardon me, Madam, If I ha'n't Patience to hear more. I loved the Princess, and she was worthy of it; tho' now, she's fallen. — perhaps she might be forced. —

Sub. Worthy of a Fig! You must pardon me, Sir; you did n't know her. You only saw her Outside. Has n't she jilted you! We are all of us too apt to be idolized by your Sex, who take us for Angels by the exterior Part, — but when we come to pass a thorough Examination — three out of four are found Devils. Your Angel — is she that holds out to the End, and participates chearfully of every Danger, Toil and Adversity; that will not forsake the Mortal she loves — in Poverty, Pain, Disgrace and Imprisonment. But for her — that will turn with the Tide and the

Wind.—She's a fallen one indeed! And may go to the Devil! From whence she came.—

Lady. O, fie! fie! *Mrs. Subtle.* You run on as spitefully as if the Lady—had been your Rival, and you had a Mind to fill up the Vacancy.

Sub. With all my Heart. What do you say *Mr. Worby*, are you willing to take me for a Supplement?

Wor. Your Manner is extremely engaging, Madam. But you are something too late. I am prepossessed of mightier Charms, and have promised to fill the Embraces of this lovely Lady.

Lady. How! how! how! Sir.—

Wor. I mean, Madam. You have promised to fill mine.

Sub. O, that's all one. I am glad of it, and wish you both joy. The *Ephesian* Matron made up a Match in a Night, and why should not, you make another in a Day? Boys and Girls may shilly-shally-I-it, three or four Months, for want of more Wit, but for Persons of your Years and Discretion to do so, who have nothing to fear nor any body to care for, is Madness and Folly.

Lady. O, your rattle! Cease your Rodomontade you.

Wor. *Mrs. Subtle* is wise, Madam, and hath given us a very useful Hint. Let us improve it, And tho' I've no Diadem—to add a little, empty Glitter to your Merit, you shall be the Empress of my Affections, and have a Throne—within my Heart.

Lady. Very scanty Domains, indeed, that one may hide with a Hand.

Sub. Sha! sha!—shall I call *Mr. Johnson*, to fill up a License?

Wor. Yes, with her Ladyship's Leave.

Lady. No, no,—We'll Walk to the Gentlemen, and see their Diversion; If *Mr. Worby's* Sorrow can bear such a Sight.

W. &c.

Wor. The Warmth of your Ladyship's Wisdom
and Goodness has dry'd up my Dolour.

When Wit and Beauty, thus their Charms unite,
Solieitude and Grief are put to flight,
Like Morning Mists, that over Waters play,
They waite and vanish like a Dream——away.

[*Exeunt.*]

The End of the Fourth Act.

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Parlour.

*Lady Nice, Mrs. Subtle, and Sir William Traffick,
sitting.*

S. W. UPON hearing this News from Mr. Sum-
well, of his Nephew's Advances and
Success, I thought it my Duty to inform your
Ladyship, as soon as possible, that your Prince is
no more than a Pageant.

Lady. How!

S. W. A Pretender, Madam, only, that never
was out of *England* in his Life, but has spent most
Part of his Time in a Compting-House in *London*,
belonging to a Friend of mine.

Lady. Are you sure of that, Sir William?

S. W. Positively sure, Madam. I have seen
him often. Put him to the Question, and he'll not
have the Impudence to deny it.

Lady. O, Heavens! How soon we are deceived!
What Lies and Falshood go to make a Man!
Surely,

Surely, Mr. *Sumwell* would never be concerned in such a Piece of Treachery.

Sub. 'Tis a Point to be tenderly touched, lest it draws on a Quarrel. whose Consequences may be fatal.

Lady. I'm greatly obliged to you, Sir *William*, for this extraordinary Discovery; and am sorry I'm unable to make a suitable Return.

S. W. 'Tis in your Ladyship's Power to reward me amply. Your Acceptance of my Person — and Fortune, which is not beneath your own, would be the most desirable Recompence in the World.

Lady. I'm unworthy of the Favour at present, Sir *William*, that could be so credulous to a Stranger. What Time and Assiduity may produce — I know not.

S. W. I should be glad to possess you with all your Failings, if Failings you have — but I know of none. Your Ladyship is all Goodness and Perfection in my Sight.

Lady. I'm so much out of Humour with Matrimony now, that were it not for the Merit of this Discovery, I shou'd n't endure the Sight of a Man again this Twelve-month. Base Creature! to think thus blindly to impose upon my Understanding! With his Principality — I must go — and reproach him! And shew him — himself! Or I shall burst with Revenge! [Exit.]

Sub. You are extremely lucky, Sir *William*, to make this Elucidation, and break off the Match.

S. W. I'm doubtful of that, Madam. It seems not to bode me the Benefits I expected.

Sub. If ever she thinks of a Husband again, her Gratitude, which is very Extensive, will make her consider your Services, first, Pray, Sir *William*, by what extraordinary Stroke of Policy did you draw

draw this Secret out of *Sumwell*, whose Interest it was to have kept it concealed?

S. W. It was done with Design — to stop my Pursuit of *Lady Nice*; not dreaming how much it was in my Power to make the Use of it I have.

Sub. Well — I think you have no Cause to despair, now, *Sir William*: the Removal of this Bar will give me a better Opportunity to serve you; and it shall go hard if you go hence unmarried. I'll do what I can for you. You remember the Condition of the Obligation —

S. W. I do, Madam. And will not fail in the Performance.

Sub. I must go after her Ladyship and qualify her Passion with a little Reason, or else she'll be guilty of some Extravagance or other. You'll go back to the Gentlemen. I presume, Sir.

S. W. Yes, Madam. — Your humble Servant.

[Exit.

Sub. *Sir William*. Your most Obedient.

Re-enter *Lady Nice*.

Lady. I thought you'd have followed me and assisted my Vengeance. Is *Sir William* gone?

Sub. Yes, Madam. And I was coming after you.

Lady. Was ever Woman thus abused?

Sub. Yes, Madam. Many an one.

Lady. What a Piece of Invention was this *Indian Princess*, her Father, and so forth?

Sub. It shews him ingenious. He play'd it off well. He'd make an excellent Actor with such a Face.

Lady. What Method shall I take, or how would you advise me to proceed in this Business? I'm under some Restraint on Account of *Sumwell*, who

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is Master of most of my Affairs, and may be injurious if he's provoked.

Sub. Your Ladyship should first be assured of the Truth. Sir *William's* a Rival, and may think to succeed by this Stratagem. He may measure your Conduct by that of some other Woman in parallel Circumstances, who — on such an Occasion would never see her Lover more, but be mad enough to marry with the next Man she met, by way of Revenge.

Lady. That's like judging in the dark; and condemning a Person without Appearance and Hearing. If Mr. *Worthy* can clear himself — he sha'n't want an Opportunity. I shall face him with Pleasure, if he proves to be innocent; and am not afraid to confront him if he's found guilty. There's as much Likelihood in your Suggestion, as there is in Sir *William's* Assertion. But how to investigate the Truth, is a Business not easily managed. If I should tell Mr. *Worthy* how Sir *William* has traduced him, he'd cut his Throat — and be hanged for it. And would his Innocence signify, then?

Sub. It must be done in a qualified Manner, and you must conceal the Informer.

Lady. Yes, if his Information's true. But if it's false! — I'd sacrifice him! tho' there was n't another Knight in the Nation. How does he know Mr. *Worthy* was never out of *England*? He might be a Merchant's Clerk in his juvenile Years, as well as Sir *William* himself, and have Business Abroad, where his Merit found Means to make his Fortune.

Sub. 'Tis natural enough, indeed, Madam. And I won't believe it now, to be any otherwise. But let it remain a Secret, I beseech you, till Tomorrow.

Enter.

Enter Allwit.

Allw. Madam, I hope you'll pardon my Rudeness in obtruding upon your Privacy, without begging Leave to enter this *Sanctum Sanctorum*. The Importance of my Business is such, as I hope will sufficiently atone for my Want of Politeness and Decorum. Yonder's my Rival, Sir *William*, who begged his Life of me but an Hour ago, and since——has provoked the Irascibility of my Cane, triumphing and flourishing upon a Promise, which he pretends your good Goddessship hath made him, of being matrimonially conjoined with his Lumbership To-morrow. Now, I dare not forbid the Banns, but having the greatest Concern for your Ladyship's Welfare, I thought it my Duty to inform you, that this same individual Knight, keeps a Couple of——Creatures, called——Ladies of Pleasure.

Lady. How do you know that, Mr. *Allwit*.

Allw. O, Madam, I have had the Honour to drink Tea with them both, and to carry them to *Ranelagh* in my own Coach, and they told me so themselves. Now, after this Discovery, I hope your Ladyship will abominate the Thoughts of such a Man for a Husband; and shine upon me, your sincere Adorer and Slave; who worships the Brightness of your Ladyship's Shadow; who lives——but by your Smiles, and subsists upon your Graces.

Sub. Why, Sir *William* has had the Assurance to say, that he caned you.

Allw. Ah——Madam! Three Strokes of this invincible Arm would mince him to Sawdust. He's no more able to cope with me, than I am able to cope with her Ladyship's Wit.

L

Lady.

Lady. But how came the chaste Mr. *Allwit* in the Company of such Creatures? I doubt you have made an Invasion upon the Knight's Property.

Allw. Who, I — Madam?

Sub. Nay, don't blush. You'll spoil all.

Allw. Do I blush, Madam? [*Looks in a Pocket Glass.*] Dear! I look Pale. Prodigious Pale! I've no Lips. [*Feels in his Pockets.*] *Mon dieu!* I've lost — my Pallet-Box.

Lady. Pray, Sir, what's that?

Allw. A small Collection of Colours, Madam; that's all. Don't your Ladyship Paint?

Lady. No, Sir; I want Skill.

Allw. That's Impossible! — begging your Ladyship's Pardon. It comes by Nature, to a fine Woman.

Lady. What! To be a Painter?

Allw. To mend her Complexion, Madam; that's all. The *Beau Mond* of both Sexes continually practice it.

Lady. O, fie! Then the handsome, pretty, compleat Mr. *Allwitt*, is only a Person in Masquerade: And instead of being the fine Gentleman we always esteemed him, may now be the Devil. Let's look at your Foot —. [*Retiring.*]

Allw. O, Madam, your Ladyship Raillies extremely fine. I always wear my own Complexion, such as it is. But when I am Ill, or the Wind has no better breeding than to blow upon me rudely, and discompose the natural Roses and Lillies of my Countenance, I am then, forced to use the Assistance of my Pallet-Box to restore them. Your great Ladies, Madam, all do the same, though they don't all care to own it.

Lady. I can't believe that, Sir. We have great Numbers of pretty Women, whose natural Colours exceed all artificial ones, and therefore it would

would be extreme Folly in them to use it. And as to those — whom Nature has not been so kind to, it must certainly be to their great Disadvantage; for the Man that is won with a Face that is borrowed, will not be kept when the Cheat is discovered; but despise both the Person, and the Artifice that trepanned him into Slavery.

Allw. O, Madam, the Science is different now, to what it was formerly. We don't lay it on with a Trowel, as they did in the last Age. There is lately Imported from *Japan*, a superlative white Water, extracted from Flakes of falling Snow, that gives a Smoothness and Gloss to the Skin, almost equal to that of a Looking-Glass; and emits a Perfume like Violets and Ambergris. But as it comes a great Way, and is long in preparing, 'tis extraordinary dear. I gave Twenty Guineas only for a Thumb Bottle of it, that lasted but a Week, with a small Paper of Pink, another of Carnation, and a Third of Rose Colour, that all together might weigh about Ten Grains.

Lady. But don't you think it a Sin as well as a Foppery to paint?

Allw. This is not painting, Madam; though its vulgarly called so; the People of Condition call it a Restorative: For its calculated purely to assist Nature, and recall the absent Bloom that ought continually to reside in the Face.

Lady. And this is called a Restorative;

Allw. Yes, Madam; and with great Propriety. Your Ladyship knows, that cold Weather, and a Fright, are very great Enemies to a fine Complexion; and as in these Cases, the People in low Life administer a Dram, and those of the next Class a Cordial; 'twas necessary to find out something more reputable and better adapted to Persons of Rank and Condition, especially the Ladies — who cannot drink Drams.

Lady.

Lady. Then this is a kind of a topical Cordial. Well, your Reasoning on the Subject is so cogent, that I've no Objection—but only to the Price.

Allw. That—seems high, indeed. But if we consider its Efficacy, truly; and the Necessity there is of keeping of it from the Vulgar, its cheap enough. What signifies Twenty Guineas a Week to a Person of Quality?

Sub. I find I must have none of it, unless the accomplished Mr. *Allwit* should send down a Couple of Bottles for your Ladyship, and another for me.

Allw. Her Ladyship is welcome to a Waggon Load, and Mrs. *Subtle*—to what Quantity she pleases.

Sub. Thank you, Sir.

Lady. None for me, Mr. *Allwit*. You see I don't want it.

Allw. That's very true; your Ladyship's Charms are superabundant, and call for Shields rather than Arrows.

Enter Dungwell.

Dung. Come, Squire, are you coming to marry my Daughter? Your Servant Mistress.—*Alice* says, you have *disbauched* her, truly enough. And therefore, now the Parson's ready, I hope you won't *refuse*.

Allw. O, she must have wedding Cloaths made, and be six Months at the Boarding-School to learn Breeding, before she's fit to be my Bride, and change her Name.—*Alice*—is so barbarous a Name, I can't bear the Sound of it.

Lady. O, Mr. *Allwit*—that's my Name, and Mrs. *Subtle*'s too.

Allw. I ask ten thousand Pardons, Madam. But I presume your Ladyship's Name is *Alicia*, which is one of the softest Sounds in the *English* Language.

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guage. Ha! ha! ha! Did you ever hear of such a visionary Match as this is like to be, Madam? Charming Miss *Dungwell* and your humble Servant! She'll be the Envy of the Age, and draw a Croud of Admirers.

Lady. If you have done the young Woman any Injury, you ought in Honour, to make her Satisfaction, Sir.

Dung. Very true, Landlady. She may be breeding, you know; and the Parish be put to Charges.

Allw. A'n't you ashamed, you unmannerly Boor, to obtrude upon a Lady's Privacy in this Manner?

Dung. How did I know you wanted to be private—with her? Is n't one Woman enough for you? Mistress, take care of him, now he talks of his *Pri—vities*, he'll *disbauch* you if he can.

Allw. The Interest I have in this Lady won't permit me to suffer this Rudeness. You had better return in a Calm than a Storm; for you must not stay here,

Dung. Why, you won't thresh me! will you?

Lady. Pray, Mr. *Allwit*, take him back to his Company; he's a little in Liquor, and does not know what he says.

Allw. Your Ladyship's Looks are commands to me, Come, Farmer Father-in-Law, let us wait upon the Parson, and see if he will grant us a—

Dung. Licence?

Allw. No, no, a little Liquor, my *Bacchus*.

Dung. O, you shall have Liquor and *Bacca* enough, when you are marry'd. Good buoy to you, Landlady. Come.

Allw. Ladies——your most Obedient. [*Exit with Dungwell.*]

Lady. A good Riddance of you both; for I don't know which is the most tolerable of the two.

Sub.

Sub. We shall do a Piece of Justice to put *Ailee* and *Allwit* together; for they have certainly consummated.

Lady. But how can it be?

Sub. I'll think of it. But we must not stay here, if we think to avoid *Allwit*, for as soon as he has discharged his Load of Dung, he is sure to come back again.

Lady. Very true. Yonder's *Worthy* in the Garden, let's take a cross Walk and meet him, as it were by Accident, and hear what he has to say for himself, upon Taxation.

Sub. Why sure, you won't mention it! As your Ladyship knows the whole Story is groundless.

Lady. How should I know that?

Sub. By its wanting Ground. A few distant Hints will be sufficient. If he's Guilty—his Countenance will shew it. His Speech will falter. His Answers be indirect and evasive. He'll endeavour to change the Subject, and give you unerring Proofs of his Falshood. Here's *Allwit* returning. Step forward—and I'll give him an Answer.

Re-enter Allwit.

Allw. Well, — I have settled the Sot. But where's her Ladyship?

Sub. She luckily left the Room but this Minute. I call it lucky—because I wanted to have an Opportunity to confer with you, in Private.

Allw. Are you sure nobody can hear us? Key-holes are dangerous Slits—thro' which—many a dark Scene has been brought to Light. I'm a fortunate Fellow, certainly. I can't stir without an Amour. Now, Madam, I wait impatiently to have my Ears tickled with the melting Accents of your dying Passion.

Sub.

Sub. O, you barbarous, hard-hearted Man! Can your Ears be pleased to hear any Thing so melancholy?

Allw. I can't help it, faith. I have had such a Number of Ladies dying for me—that it affects me lately, no more than it does a Doctor or an Undertaker. But come, my dear, let me know your Request, I am something more merciful now.

Sub. If it be so—I dare not divulge for Fear of a Denial.

Allw. By *Juno*, you needn't. I have long had a secret Approbation of Mrs. *Subtle's* good Graces.

Sub. You flatter me now, Sir.

Allw. By *Pan*, not I. I should like an Affair with you, as soon as with any Woman I know.

[*Takes her Hand.*]

Sub. But my Affair is Matrimony, Sir.

Allw. That's a solemn Affair—and requires Consideration.

Sub. Ah! These are the Tricks of all you Men. 'Tis well I don't speak for myself. Lady *Nice* is the suffering Subject of your Contempt and Refusal.

Allw. By the Face of the King from whom I am descended! I did not refuse or contemn the proffered Blessing of that inestimable Lady, but yourself. I wear her Fetters—and have done it long, and never yet wished for my Enlargement. I courted Captivity and hugged my Chain. Where is that sacred Being, that I may fling myself at her Feet, and express the Gratitude that inspires my Soul? I'll marry her this Moment.

Sub. Fair and softly, Sir. The least public Acknowledgement will shock her Delicacy, and spoil all. You must n't say one Word to her, nor any one else about so dull a Solemnity, till you are both in Bed together, and the Curtains drawn.

Allw.

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Allw. That's hard——The Delight of Speaking a Thing is of equal Pleasure with me to the doing of it. But I know she's a Lady of great Singularity, and so I'm content.

Sub. But there's a certain customary Consideration frequent on these Occasions, Sir, that we ha'n't spoke a Word of, yet. Sir *William* has offered me a round Thousand.

Allw. I understand you, Madam, I'll add Five Hundred more.

Sub. I thank you, Sir. I must follow her Ladyship into the Garden. And you may return to the Company, beckon out the Parson and get a Licency; and when that's ready——meet me again in the next Room.

Allw. I'll do't with Wings. [Exit.

Enter Ailce.

Ail. Is Father here?

Sub. No, Child;——but he will be here, presently. Well, has the Squire and you made up this Match yet?

Ail. No, forsooth. He won't ha' me, now. He talks of having the Lady——for all he promised me, first. And Father says——I may be with Child by him, too.

Sub. Suppose——I should oblige him to have you, what will you give me?

Ail. Why, I'll give you the Half Crown that he gave me, in the Wood.

Sub. Do you think you could pass for the Lady, and marry him, in her Stead?

Ailce. Yes, if I had but a silk Gown. Fine Feathers make fine Birds,

Sub. You shall have that and all other Requisites, if you think you can personate her Ladyship 'till the Ceremony is over.

Ailce.

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Ailce. But, he knows my Face.

Sub. You shall be married in a Mask.

Ailce. Then I'll jump out of my Skin, for Joy!

Sub. O, you must be grave, to look like a Lady.
And when you're at Chapel, speak as little —
and as low as you can. Come along with me, and
I'll give you some other Instructions.

Ailce. Thank you kindly. He's a mortal sweet
Man, if I can but catch him. [Exeunt.]

Enter Sir William Traffick with a Letter.

S. W. It seems to be a Woman's Hand. [Reads.]

S I R,

" AT length I've obtained Lady *Nice's* Consent.
" Get a Licence directly, and take her in the
" Humour. She won't be thanked; so speak not
" a Word to her nor any one else. To prevent
" any Interruption from either of your Rivals, I
" have persuaded her to be married in a Mask. As
" soon as you are ready — wait at the Chapel
" Door;

For Yours,

ALICE STUBBS.

Enter Mr. Johnson.

O, Mr. *Johnson*, — I wanted to see you. You
must fill up a License in two Minutes. Lady *Nice*
is now ready at the Chapel. I told you how it
would be.

John. Having received Instructions from Mr.
Sumwell for the same Purpose, Sir *William*, I came
in quest of you, to put the finishing Stroke to it.

S. W. All Come, then, — I'll wait on you
directly. [Exeunt.]

M

Scene

SCENE II. *A Garden.**Lady Nice meeting Worthy.*

Wor. Ha! My Empress! This is lucky indeed, to meet you here. Finding you had Company in the Parlour, I took a Walk hither, to pass away the lingering Moments that kept me from my Love! My Life! and every Thing that's valuable on this side Heaven.

Lady. You mean the Princess, I presume, Sir.

Wor. No, Madam. I mean your own dear self! The Princess's Infidelity, and your irresistible Charms, have wiped away her Image from my Soul, and raised me into Raptures that feast my Meditations with Delights unutterable. [*Kisses her Hand.*]

Lady. You are pleasant, Sir. And I should be glad to enjoy an equal Hilarity. But some ill News I have just received from London, has ruffled my Soul, and distracted my Peace. I've a Relation, that having no great Dependance in the World, was put Apprentice to a Merchant, and after he was out of his Time, instead of going Abroad, as his Friends advised, he tarried at Home, and turned Fortune Hunter.—

Wor. He was a Merchant Adventurer, then.

Lady. Poaching about—— he found out a Widow with a good Inheritance; pretended he had been Abroad, and acquired a vast Fortune; and was on the Verge of Matrimony with her; when a Person that knew him perfectly well, coming to visit the Relict, discovered the Cheat, and ruined my poor Kinsman; who having purchased a Ring at a vast Price, to present to the Lady, and several Suits of rich Cloaths to equip him for this Adventure, on Credit, is now forced to skulk and hide

in the Country, for fear of being sued for his fortune-hunting Habilliments.

Wor. Poor Gentleman! I pity his Misfortunes, greatly. As he had the Honour of being related to your Ladyship, and is now the peculiar Object of your Concern, there is no Question to be made of his Merit, and therefore I think the Lady he made his Addressee to, should have had some Commiseration of his Condition, and have reimbursed him or married him.

Lady. Very true, Sir.—If she liked him, For where there is Money enough on one Side, its sufficient. For my Part—if I liked a Man's Person and Behaviour, I should rejoice that it was in my Power to oblige him with an affluent Fortune, since such a Man—if he has any Honour or Gratitude, must always look upon his Benefactress with Tenderness, Delight and Love.

Wor. I hope she returned the Ring.

Lady. Yes, Sir. Here it is. [*Gives him his Ring.*]

Wor. Am I then caught! Madam. [*Kneeling.*] behold at your Feet the Original of that Impostor you have painted to my fluttering, guilty Soul, imploring Pardon. I am, 'tis true, Mr. Sumwell's Nephew—but no Prince, nor even a Person of any private Fortune. And what I've done to deceive your Ladyship—has been solely the Effect of my Uncle's Avarice. For having no other Expectations but from him, I was forced to comply with what my Heart abhorred. But, notwithstanding—I was determined, never to lead your Ladyship to the Altar in the dark; but to take the first convenient Opportunity to elucidate the whole Affair. This Opportunity you have now given me, and encouraged me moreover, to make this

Declaration, by your own indulgent, generous and figurative Expressions.

Lady. Very well, Sir. Rise—I threw out the Bait you so greedily swallowed, on purpose to catch you. According to your own Doctrine, I shall chuse the former Alternative, and reimburse you what you've been out of Pocket on my Account, and then we shall be even.

Wor. No, Madam—we can never be even, but by being one! For though my Uncle rashly pushed me on this Affair, without my having any previous Knowledge of your Ladyship,——I no sooner saw those captivating Eyes, than Love——like a Torrent, tumbling down a Mountain, overwhelmed my Soul. And as you was pleased to express some little Regard for my Person and Merit, you added Fuel to the Fire, and encouraged me to love you. And can I forego that Love! No. And as you approved of the Prince with an imaginary Fortune——approve of the Man with a solid Expectancy: My Uncle is rich, and will make me his Heir, if this Discovery does not disgust him, and prevent it; which it certainly will——if ever it comes to his Knowledge, that it was the Effect of my Generosity; for he'll christen it Imprudence, and cast me off, instantly.

Lady. I should be sorry to have you suffer for your Generosity to me, Sir. But I'm afraid your Cunning rather than your Conscience produced this Discovery: For after you found I knew your real Character, you thought a free and ingenuous Confession, would have more Weight with me, than a forced one.

Wor. I depended solely on your Ladyship's ingenuous and disinterested Acknowledgments, which seemed to deserve the Explanation I have made. But if that avails me not, and for Want of a Principality

pality I must lose you for ever, yet suffer me to carry on the Deception a little longer, to amuse my Uncle, and draw him into some Scheme, that may secure a Fortune sufficient to carry on the Business I was bred to; which his Covetousness would never permit me to do, yet. And then Madam—use me as you please.

Lady. I'm unwilling to be a stalking Horse, and cover a Cheat. Will you take my Advice, Mr. Worby?

Wor. Yes, Madam. I'm under your Mercy, and will rely upon your Dictates.

Lady. I have some Friends, and can procure you a Place; for I would not have you disoblige your Uncle. Will the Court or the Country—the Army or the Navy best suit your Designs, and promote your Interests?

Wor. I've no Ambition to be a Courtier, Madam; nor Disposition at present, to be a Soldier; nor yet any skill in Maritime Affairs; so that the Country seems to be my proper Province.

Lady. Then you shall have the Management of my Estate—and a Place at my Table as long as you please.

Wor. That ——— Madam, will still disgust my Uncle. For though he wants it not, he'll be prodigiously chagrined to lose the Administration of your Ladyship's Affairs, and see me in his Place.

Lady. O, he shall continue in the same Situation, save the Comptrolment, and that I shall vest in you.

Wor. The Grant, Madam, appears to be great, but without your dear Self, I dare not accept it.

Lady. O, I am one of the Appurtenances you must take with it, of Course, to have and to hold for the Term of our joint Lives, to the sole Use and behoof of yourself.

Wor.

90 **THE NICE LADY.**

Wor. This is a Deed of Gift above my Deserts; but the sole Business of my Life shall be to balance the Obligation, by the sincerest and warmest Regard that ever Man was capable of expressing for a Woman. How shall I thank you! By what Tokens shall I shew my Gratitude? *[Kisses her Hand.]*

Lady. By being always in the same good Humour, and bearing the Yoke I shall lay upon you, without grumbling.

Wor. Your Load will be light, and I shall embrace it with Chearfulness and Vigour. *[Embraces her Waist.]* But pray, let me know—if I'm not beholden to Sir *William*, for the unkind Things that have passed just now.

Lady. When the Company leaves us, perhaps I may let you know the Informer; but 'till after that Time, I beg to be excused.

Wor. It shall not be productive of any Disturbance, if your Ladyship lets me know it now. I remember Sir *William* said, he had seen me somewhere, and I was in some Disorder; lest he should recollect where. But neither he, nor the whole World, can impeach me of the least Dishonesty, Irregularity or Falshood, save in this Contrivance of my Uncle's. I have a natural Abhorrence to every Thing that opposes Religion and Virtue; and shall come, though a Citizen, to your Ladyship's Arms, untainted with any of the Vices of the Place.

Lady. Your Qualifications then are such as exceed the Value of Riches, and raise you in my Esteem above the Possession of Millions. Money—its true, will purchase the Necessaries we eat drink and wear, and a few Superfluities beside, but where Contentment, Constancy and Love are wanting—'tis Dross and Dirt.

Wor.

Wor. As the Parson's in the House, and your Ladyship has a Chapel, let us not procrastinate our Joys, but embrace the present Minute, and be happy for ever.

Lady. O, fie! Shall we pay no Deference to Decency?

Wor. Yes, Madam; but not to Custom, the Tyrant of the Times, whom the Brave, the Wise, and the Noble despise.

Lady. Let us stay a Week.

Wor. Not an Hour, my Angel. *[Taking her Hands]*

Lady. Why, you won't force me!

Wor. Indeed, but I will. *[Takes her up in his Arms, and carries her off.]*

SCENE III. A Parlour.

Sir William Traffick leading in Mrs. Subtle Masked.

S. W. Now—I hope your Ladyship will untwister, and let me wish you Joy.

Sub. Yes, Sir William. *[Unmasks.]*

S. W. Why, 'tis Mrs. Subtle! *[Starting.]*

Sub. It was,—but 'tis now, Lady Traffick. I wish you Joy, Sir William. *[Going to kiss him.]*

S. W. Why, I'm cheated! bamboozled! choused and deceived! Didn't you send me Word I was to marry Lady Nice! and now, you have surreptitiously, fraudulently and corruptly put yourself in her Place.

Sub. 'Tis even so, Sir William, "We Merchants do nothing but in the Way of Gain," Mr. Allwise outbid you by Five Hundred Pounds, and if I hadn't supplied the Vacuum with myself, you'd have lost

lost your Labour, and gone hence without a Wife; which Five Hundred Pounds will be some Addition to the Fortune you'll receive with me. You have also by this Match, saved the Thousand Pounds you was to give me; which put together, makes Twenty-five Hundred Pounds: No despiseable Portion; as Times go, I'll assure you, Sir.

S. W. What signifies Twenty-five Hundred Pounds! I have twenty Times as much; and am bit! Confoundedly bit!

Sub. I am rejoiced to hear of your Affluence, Sir *William*, the more there is on your Side—the less will do on mine.

S. W. I married you for Lady *Nice*: A Pox of your black Vizard! However, the Ceremony is not compleated, yet: I'll not bed you.

Sub. As you please for that; I know who will.

S. W. So, you have sold Lady *Nice* to that Fool *Allwit*! I shall acquaint her Ladyship of your mercenary Tricks.

Sub. Come, Sir *William*, 'tis to no Purpose to be testy, now. You liked me very well, at our first Interview, and protested I wanted no Qualification but Money, and that—you've now endowed me with—

S. W. Endow you with the Devil! You shall never finger a Farthing of mine.

Sub. You can have no Objection on Account of Honour—for I'm now, as much a Lady—as Lady *Nice* herself. Pray, Sir *William*, how must I Rank? Don't a Knight's Wife take Place of a Baronet's Widow? I'm a little unskilled in these Matters, at present.

S. W. When I've the Honour of seeing your mock Ladyship in *London*, I shall do myself the Pleasure of committing you to *Bridewell*, as a disorderly

orderly Woman and a Cheat; and then you'll be instructed in point of Precedency.

Sub. And that's to be my Recompence for falling in Love with you at first Sight, is it? If you are so cruel already, what will you be when the Honey Moon's over? Would I had married a good-natured mean Man, if he'd wanted a Coat. The Expectations I have from my Brother, who is in a deep Consumption, would quickly have made him a Gentleman.

S. W. Pray, what is he worth?

Sub. His landed Estate is not above Twelve Hundred a Year, but he has little less than Twenty Thousand Pounds in the Funds.

S. W. Do you think, Lady Traffick, your Brother will die soon? Mourning——will save the Expence of Wedding Cloaths.

Sub. The Doctors have done with him. Perhaps he may languish a Week. We can stay here, and keep our Marriage secret, 'till then.

S. W. Very right. A Woman of Prudence is a Fortune of herself. I hope your Ladyship's Brother is a Batchelor, my Dear.

Sub. Yes. He never had a Constitution for Wedlock.

S. W. Has he made a Will?

Sub. No. I am his Heir at Law. He has nobody else.

S. W. Then we should be on the Spot, to take care of his Effects: Servants are selfish and dishonest, and may run away with many of his Moveables before we hear a Word of his Death.

Sub. That would disgust my Brother. He would think we came to take Possession before he was Dead: sick Folks are wayward and humour-some. I've a trusty Domestic in place, whose Honesty is indisputable: He'll send us timely Notice

upon the least Alteration of his Master; and take care of his Effects.

S. W. Pray, where does your Ladyship's Brother dwell?

Sub. At *Nolands*, in the *North*.

S. W. At *No-lands*! Your Answers are pretty much in the negative Strain; and perhaps the Seat of *No-lands* may be like the Kingdom of *Highb Hill*, and both non-existent.

Sub. 'Tis a cautious Way of speaking I have lately fallen into, by conversing with Mr. *Sumwell*, his Words are usually upon the Reserve. Pauciloquy in a Wife Sir *William*, is seldom reckoned amongst her Failings.

S. W. 'Tis otherwise with me. I should hate a Wife that is Tongue-tied: but these are Words—to no Purpose. I have been Building, Madam, and want Cash, very much. Can your Ladyship think of any Expedient to furnish me, quickly?

Sub. Yes, Sir *William*, you may borrow.—

S. W. Without Interest or Security? I have borrowed already, as much as I can. I am very much in Debt. I am not the Man the World takes me for; and would not say this to any body but my Wife. My Credit's at stake, and you must redeem it.

Sub. What I am Mistress of shall be at your Disposal. I am sorry to hear you are so poor. The World calls you a Miser; and says you are Rich.

S. W. The World's a Liar.—I am poorer than *Job*. Pray, let me have it, immediately. I have had a great Loss at Sea, and expect to see my Name in the next *Gazette*, among the Bankrupts?

Sub. Won't To-morrow Morning do?

S. W.

S. W. I want some, now; I was robbed Yesterday.

Sub. Perhaps, I have Twenty Guineas in my Purse. [*Gives him her Purse.*]

S. W. Every little helps. I love to be taking. —Why, this is my own! The very individual Purse I bribed you with—to—cheat myself. They are all of 'em light; and two of them are naught: But I thought you would not look a Gift-Horse in the Mouth. You'll remember me To-morrow.

Sub. As I like you to Night.

S. W. At your Laconics, again?

Sub. A rising Expectation is preferable to a settled Assurance; for when the Limits of the latter are perfectly known, we are soon palled with Possession; the Spirits grow dull, the Fancy flags, and nothing is left to give 'em Life or Elevation.

Enter Allwit—and Ailce in a Mask, dressed like Lady Nice.

Allw. Sir William, I'm your most Obedient—This Luminary in Eclipse, is the wedded Wife of your humble Servant. You'll give our Espousals Joy, I hope.

S. W. Yes, Mr. *Allwit*, most readily, what is done, can't be undone. Madam, by your Ladyship's Leave [*Advancing.*] on removing that Cloud from your fair Front, I shall give you the customary Compliment ordained by the Rites of *Hy-men.* [*Ailce curtesies.*]

Allw. Come, my deat, banish your Bashfulness and *denubilate.* Sir William's a good-natured Man, and will forgive the few Frauds we have put upon him in this Affair. You didn't bid —high enough, Sir William. I carried her with the other Five Hundred.

The NICE LADY.

Sub. Which——now, Mr. *Allwit*, I am ready to receive.

Allw. 'Tis a Debt of Honour, Madam, and therefore I shall pay it. Here are Notes for Five Hundred Pounds.—And I acknowledge before Sir *William*, I stand indebted to you in the Sum of One Thousand Pounds more, which I promise to pay upon Demand.

Sub. Please to put it in Writing, Sir, there's Pen, Ink and Paper in that Room.

Allw. Madam, I'll oblige you, instantly. [*Exit.*]

Sub. Pray, Sir *William*, look over these Notes, and see if they are good. One Fraud may be repaid with another. Well, my dear——[*To Ailce.*] how do you like Matrimony.

Ailce. I don't know; I ha'n't tasted it, yet. When must I pull off my Mask?

Sub. O, not yet. I'll tell you when. A Minute too soon will spoil all: And then he'll make you be unmarried again.

Ailce. I'll wear it a Week, first.

S. W. Yes, my Lady, they're all Good. Shall I put 'em up, as Part of your Remembrance Tomorrow Morning? I've a young Prodigal that presses me to take a Mortgage of Three Thousand Pounds, and this Sum will just make up the Money.

Sub. If it was five Times as much——'twould be at your Service.

S. W. Thank you, my dear. If your Comings-in amount to as much every Day, we shall be an exceeding happy Couple.

Re-enter Allwit.

Allw. There, Madam. There's my promissory Note for the Money.

Sub.

The NICE LADY. 97

Sub. I thank you, Sir. Sir *William*——you'll take this, too, in part of my Portion.

S. W. Yes, my Lady. Mr. *Allwit's* a safe Man. Its made payable to order, I hope. Yes, I see it is.

Allw. What! has Sir *William* and you, made a matrimonial Conjunction, Madam? I give your Ladyship Joy. [*Salutes her.*]

Sub. Yes, Sir; as sure as you have joined your sweet Self to the Body of Miss *Dungwell*,

Allw. That's no sure Thing, Madam.

Sub. Uncover your Face, my Dear, and dart your Rays upon him, that his Eyes may be Witnesses of the Surety thereof. [*Ailce unmasks.*]

Allw. This Artifice won't do with me. This is not the Woman I married. Whilst I was absent about the Note, my Lady was spirited away, and this Dowdy put in her Place.

Ailce. Who do you call Dowdy? Ha! [*Boxes his Ears.*] I won't take it——now I'm married——I won't so, I tell you but that. I'm your lawful Wife, now, for all you deny me, and as good a Squire's Lady as any in the Country.

Enter Dungwell.

Dung. What's the Matter, *Ailce*, ha? I heard thy Tongue.

Ailce. Only Husband and me——be at hard Words, Father, that's all, and that's nothing for married Folks, you know. They——falls out, and falls in, and nobody minds it.

Dung. O, if that's all——tis n't much. Come, kiss and be Friends, and I'll give you both a Blessing.

Ailce. Ah——but he says, he didn't marry me; he married my Lady.

Dung.

Dung. Didn't he? Ecod, but he did, and I am Witness to it, and other Folks too. And if bedding and wedding is the same as wedding and bedding, you're both Man and Wife, as sure as a Gun.

Sub. 'Tis the same Thing, Farmer; no matter which is done first.

Dung. Then strike her luck, Squire. She's new Ground, and you have had the breaking of her up; and I war'nt you a good Crop at Harvest.

S. W. I think she's a tid Bit, friend *Allwit*, what makes you so shy?

Allw. I find you have all conspired to mortify me. But its some Alleviation to my Afflictions to find I shall save the Thousand Pound Note, since it was made in a wrong Name.

Sub. I'm sorry, Sir, this Sophistry will do you no Service. My Name was *Subtle*, on the Day of the Date thereof, and you have not mentioned the Hour.

Allw. But you know the Condition of the Obligation was my Marriage with Lady *Nice*.

Sub. Your Note is for *Value received*, Sir; absolute, and without Condition. But Sir *William*, whose Property the Money is, now, must be the Arbiter in this Case.

S. W. I'll have every Shilling of the Money. We must reduce him as low as we can, to bring him to a Level with his Lady, that he may n't reproach her hereafter, with inequality of Fortune. *Dung-well*—what will you give your Daughter?

Dung. I can give her a Brace of Hundreds upon Occasion, but Son-in-Law doesn't want Money, he's a Squire, and has *never* so much.

S. W. About the same Sum, I believe, when his Debts are paid. So I think it an equal Match.

Allw. This is extreamly fine, indeed. Sure, you think I am Pigeon-livered and lack Gall, as *Shake-spear*

ſpear ſays; but the Time may come—that Re-
prizals may be made.

Sub. There's nothing like the Time preſent,
Mr. *Allwit*; let 'em feel the Irascibility of your
Cane, again. I ſhould be glad to ſee you lick this
lubberly Father-in-Law of yours, 'til he lyes
down.

Allw. He's no Father-in-Law of mine, Madam.
Do you think I'm Mad! I'd as ſoon be married to
my ſorrel Mare, and propagate Brutes, as Bed with
a Baggage that beats her Huſband on his Nuptial
Day.

Ailce. Fie upon you! A'n't you aſhamed to compare
Chriſtians with Brutes! Is this your Boarding-
School Breeding? I'll ha' none out. But however,
call me Baggage again—and I'll hit you a good
Dowſe o'the *Chops*, for all Madam talks of licking
Father.

Allw. Was there ever ſuch a Termagant!

Ailce. Turn again? Why ſhou'dn't I? Mother
wou'dn't take it of Father, I'm ſure.—and why
ſhould I? Look you. Squire, if you'll be a good
Huſband—I'll be a good Wife. But I won't
be called Baggage, and Brute, and Dowdy, I won't
ſo. I'll be called by ſuch Names as you called me
in the Wood.

Allw. I have forgot what they were, now: But
if you are able to recollect them, I'll endeavour to
obſerve your polite Precepts.

Ailce. Why, I'll be called Angel, and Charmer,
and May-Dew, and ſo forth.

Dung. And my Dear and my Honey—are
handsomer Words than Baggage and Brute. Ad!
She is like her Mother—as hot as Pepper, *ſſoyth*.
You are under Petticoat Government now, Squire,
and had beſt look to't.

Allw.

106 THE NICE LADY.

Allw. Not I. I have been married these Four Years, and have a Wife and Children in *London*. So the Biter is bit, and you and your Daughter may both go and hang yourselves.

Sub. O, that won't do, Mr. *Allwit*; we know better. Where was you married?

Allw. At St. *Pauls*.

Sub. When? what Day of the Month?

Allw. The first of *May*, four Years ago.

Sub. What Day of the Week was it?

Allw. Sunday, Madam.

Sub. That's a remarkable Day. [*Looks in a Pocket Almanack.*] But 'tis a false One. The first of *May* four Years ago, was on a *Wednesday*.

Enter Lady Nice, Mr. Worthy, Sumwell, Johnson, and two Gentlemen.

Lady. So, *Lady Traffick*, I wish you Joy. [*Salutes her.*] I find by Mr. *Johnson*, you have stolen a Knight.

Sub. No more than pounded him, Madam, for being out out of his Pasture. If your Ladyship can inform me who he belongs to—I shall restore the Stray to the right Owner.

S. W. Your Ladyship will permit me to return the Compliment [*Salutes Lady Nice.*]

Wor. Madam, I wish your Ladyship Joy.

[*Salutes Subtle, and the others do the same.*]

Lady. This, was an unexpected Conjunction. Hi! hi! What's the matter with Mr. *Allwit*? He looks as much down in the Mouth as if he was married too. What ails you, Worshipper? You used to be all Air and Adoration.

Allw. Madam, I'm your Ladyship's most obsequious, humble Slave.—

Sub. Ah! poor Man! He has been married these four Years, and has seven or eight Children.

Lady.

The NICE LADY. 101

Lady. O, dear! how I'm disappointed? Did n't you promise to make me, happy, inconstant Man?

Allw. Had I been dead and buried four Years — that ravishing! enchanting Voice! thus modulated, would charm me back to Life! Madam, I'm traduced, ridiculed and abused. I am not married, but keep myself a Vestal for your Ladyship's Choice.

Sub. How! Not married? Why, did n't you say so, yourself?

Dung. Ai, — I heard him say so, Landlady. Nay — I saw him married — e'en now — to our *Ailce*.

Allw. O, *June*!

Ailce. No matter whether 'twas *June* or *January*; 'twas not an Hour ago; and that — Mr. *Johnson*, there, knows, for he married us.

Lady. Is it true, Mr. *Johnson*?

Johns. You must not refer to me, Madam. Mr. *Allwit* has promised to make me a Dean, and if I disoblige my Patron, I shall lose my Preferment.

Dung. Make you a Dean! If he makes you a Devil — you ought to speak the Truth. And I think I'm a better *Pattern* than he is. Don't I pay you a Matter of a'most Five Pounds a Year, for one thing or to'ther? I thought you had been a better Christian, Mr. *Johnson*.

Allw. No, no, — no Christian at all. Hold your Tongue — Parson, and I'll make you a Bishop.

Johns. Nay — now, I must speak. Yes, Madam, I united this Couple in the same Manner that, I had the Honour of uniting your Ladyship and this Gentleman, since. As these Gentlemen can well attest.

Lady. O, fie! Mr. *Johnson*, what a Tell-tale you are? You shall marry me no more for't.

O

Sub.

Sub. O, Joy! Joy! Joy! I fly to give you Joy!

[*Takes Worthy in one Hand, and Nice in the other, and receives Salutes from both.*]

—Be bright O Sun, and shine upon this joyful nuptial Day!

S. W. Madam, I am glad I can return the Complement in kind. [*Salutes Lady Nice.*] *Mr. Worthy*, I wish you happy. [*Shakes Hands with Worthy.*]

Wor. I thank you, Sir William—but my Happiness is already commenced. I'm possessed [*Takes Lady Nice's Hand—and kisses it.*] of all that's valuable in a Woman. She abounds with Wit, Beauty, Neatness and good Humour; and has a Competency sufficient to set us above Desire, or the Frowns of Fortune.

Lady. I should think myself equally happy too, if I hadn't a small Allay on poor *Mr. Allwit's* Account.

Allw. Your Ladyship's Concern for my invincible Misfortunes is a Cordial to my fallen Spirits, and just enables me to give you Thanks and congratulate your Nuptials. [*Salutes Lady Nice.*] But surely, my Case is incomparably wretched! Married to a Girl without Family, Fortune or Breeding, and at the Expence of Fifteen Hundred Pounds too, at a Time that my Affairs press me to Oeconomy and Thrift!—what Additions could the Devil make to my Afflictions?

[*Sumwell, Dungwell, Ailce and the rest, talk in dumb Shew.*]

Sub. The Visits of your gay Friends to see your accomplished Lady; and the present Payment of my Thousand Pounds.

Lady.

Lady. What Thousand Pounds, my Dear?

Sub. A small Note——made payable to me, for the Service I did him with your Ladyship: Which —— with Five Hundred Pounds already paid, makes the Sum total he mentioned just now.

Lady. O, you must n't take it. You'll mortify him into a Consumption, and make Mr. *Johnson* lose his Deantry.

Dung. And me —— my Lieutenant Corporal's Commission of the Jurymen at *Sizes*.

Ailce. And me——my Husband. But now he's poor, I don't mind it much. Father——don't let any one use my Wheel, for I shall want it when I come to spinning again, and that will be by and by, I find. For I warn't this fine finical Fellow can't Work to maintain a body.

Lady. We must all of us join to do something for his Relief. You shall relinquish the Fifteen Hundred Pounds which would not be good in Equity. Sir *William* shall forgive him the Interest due on his Mortgage, and I'll Advance him the Principal to redeem his Estate, and abate him the Interest for five Years to come, to encourage his Oeconomy, and settle his Affairs; if Mr. *Worthy* is willing.

Wor. I am most readily so——Madam: It might have been my own Case, and I should have been glad to have found the like Favour.

Sub. I also consent, if Sir *William* is willing.

S. W. As far as the Notes——to please my Lady, but the Interest is none of my own. The Mortgage Money belongs to an Orphan that I am Trustee for.

Sum. Come, Sir *William*, do a generous Action for once, I know its your own Money: Otherwise ——I shall do it for you. There's a certain Agreement between your Lady and myself, that was to

take Effect on my Nephew's Marriage with Lady *Nice*, that will answer both Purposes very well, and hurt none of us. For being willing to promote my Kinsman, I promised her a Brace of Thousands to make her Amends for the Loss of her Bedfellow.

Lady. 'Twas a powerful Bribe; but seems to impeach Mr. *Sumwell* of making a Property of a poor unwary Widow. But I forgive it, for the Sake of the Receiver. How could you sell your Friend's Liberty, my Dear, for what you might have commanded any Hour? [*To Subtle.*]

Sub. I did not, Madam. Neither could I do it. The Reward waited solely on the Contingency. I even stipulated not to use any insidious Artifice, or endeavour to wrest your Inclinations. But if such a Thing happened—I was to receive such a Sum.

Lady. And as such a Thing—now, has happened, and your Ladyship receives the Money, Mr. *Worthy*, in Honour, must reimburse his Uncle.

Sum. No, Madam. So far from that, that a Moiety thereof would have been every Shilling out of her own Pocket. For Lady *Traffick* is not the deceas'd Mr. *Subtle*'s Daughter, as was always supposed, but my own. And as I intended to make my Nephew and her, Joint Heirs at my Death, she would then have received a Thousand Pounds less.

Sub. O, surprizing! Sir, your Blessing. [*Kneels with Sir William to Sumwell.*]

Sum. Pray, rise—you have it already.

Sub. How could you thus long estrange yourself from your Child, my dear Papa? [*Embraces Sumwell*] The awful and reverend Regard I have always irresistably paid to your Instructions, loudly confirm the Truth of this Discovery. [*Sumwell weeps.*]

Wor.

Wor. My Affections also, for your Ladyship, from our first Knowledge of one another, no less corroborate the Verity thereof. [*Salutes Mrs.*

Subtle.

Lady. Well—this is strange indeed. But, I rejoice at it my Dear, no less than yourself. I always took you for a Batchelor, Mr. *Sumwell*.

Sum. My Marriage with her Mother, who was a Woman of Condition, was a Secret to all the World, but the Parson and ourselves, Madam; and as Things were unfavourably circumstanced at that Time, and her Death ensued soon after her Delivery, I have never undeceived the World in their Belief of my being a Batchelor, to this Day.

S. W. Sir, in compliance with your Request, whose Alliance I am very proud of, I shall remit Mr. *Allwit's* Interest, and make his Spouse a Present of an Hundred Guineas, to enable her to appear as his Wife.

Lady. That's generously spoken.

Allw. Gentlemen and Ladies, I'm so much your Debtor, I can't think of a Form sufficient to thank you in; therefore I hope you'll excuse me, and be satisfied with this frank Acknowledgment of my Inability, for the present, and expect my Gratitude 'till a more favourable Hour.

Lady. Come hither, Mrs. *Allwit*. To make your Husband some Amends for not marrying of a Gentlewoman; we have joined our Purse to give him a Fortune with you: You must therefore endeavour to deserve it, and render yourself as agreeable to him as possible: Lady *Traffick* and myself, who sha'n't part soon, will give you some Instructions.

Ailce. I thank you Madam, and will do my endeavour to make him a good Wife; for I loves him well enough.

Dung.

Dang. Ai. — Well said, *Ailce*. Mind your Hits, and you'll soon learn to be a Gentlewoman, I find. Landlady—here, is as good a School-Dame as you can go to, to learn *Complementation* and *Gentilityship*.

Lady. I must now, Mr. *Allwit*, speak a Word with you, and advise you not to treat your Spouse ill on account of her Birth or Ignorance of the great World, and the Follies that sparkle therein. She is raw and unpolished, but as she is young, innocent, and not ugly, and is willing to learn; she may make you as good a Wife as a Town-bred Lady, with all her *Airs* at Maturity. She's as supple as a Glove, and Indulgence will bend her to any Thing. You have her pure and simple from the Hand of Nature, and may mould her to what Form you please.

Allw. I shall lay up your Ladyship's Sayings in my Heart, and obey your Directions as so many Oracles. Come, my Nymph, [*Taking Ailce by the Hand.*] I'll endeavour to polish your Rusticity, and change you from an Animal to a rational Being.

Lady. Well—at length, I think the Difficulties we have all of us undergone, are pretty well reconciled, and all of us happy, in a tolerable Degree. Let us now and then, hereafter, remember the Foibles that made us unhappy, and avoid their Dangers and Inconveniencies. I—have been censured for a supercilious Nicety; for which—I am now, punished with the Want of Servants. Mr. *Allwit*—for his Ambition, Foppery and Affectation, is made the Dupe of a Country Girl. Sir *William*—for Bribery, and so forth, is condemned to the Arms of a finished Coquette: and Mr. *Wortby*, for soaring too high, and affecting a Principality—to those of a stale Widow. Lady *Traffick*—for affecting Honour, is buried in the
Arms

Arms of an avaricious Knight; and poor *Ailce*—thirsting after Gentility, is linked with the Fetters of a Pop. Thus—with equal Justice, we are each of us punished for grasping at something which we want Talents to reach.

Wor. Your Ladyship has so good a Gift at Moralizing, that it would be the highest Presumption to take the Task out of your Hand: But as the Justice you mention, seems to manifest Rewards, rather than Punishments, to most of us, I thought it might not be amiss to rectify your Conclusions, and make them consistent. Our Lots in Life have been very unequal, but Marriage—that unites the High and the low, the Rich and the Poor, has now put 'em on a different Footing. Let us that were low, endeavour to deserve the good Fortune we have acquired, and make such agreeable Companions, that our kind condescending Consorts, may never have any Cause to repine at the Favours they have bestowed; and give demonstrative Examples, that it is neither Riches nor Poverty, Dignity nor Rusticity, that constitute Happiness in Wedlock; but Love, Good-nature, Unanimity and Indulgence.

Nor more—let Men, from Diff'rence of their
[Sex,

Assume a Sway that ev'ry Fool affects,
To tease himself—and her he loves—perplex,
But join'd in *one*—*be one* the Rule and Pow'r,
And mutual Joys will blossom ev'ry Hour.

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by *Dungwell*.

BUT, hold—good Folks—before you go away,
Give *Dungwell* Leave—a Word or two to say,
And ask you, how you like this *brand-new* Play. }

To those high Folks—[*Pointing to the Galleries.*]
[that yon' high Places fill,
I must speak first—or else they'll take it Ill;
And say—I have no Manners, Sense nor Breeding,
Altho' my *Fa-ther* brought me up to Reading.
As to the little People—here below,
That Tongue-ty'd fit, like Cuckolds all a Row;
They must have Patience, and abstain from Jours,*
Untill I've spoken to the higher Powers;
Who know me better than the low Ones do,
My Wisdom, Parts—and my Behaviour too.

Most high and mighty—Friends to Mirth and
[Wit,
With Horns—exalted—far above the Pit;
Applaud our Play—and wish poor *Ailcey* Joy,
And she shall treat you with some more *Pork-poy*.
And I—when once a *Person of Condition*,
And ha' Lieutenant-Corporal's Commission,
And Deputy of Executions made,
Will give you all a Cast of my new Trade.

But

* *Jour*—is a Western Word for *Jarring*, or *Jouring*
like Dogs, when they Disagree.

E P I L O G U E.

But what have I been saying!—'Tis I hope,
No Bribery sure!—If each Man finds his Rope:
The Labour therefore, only must be mine,
Which freely I bestow without Design.

As to the lower Folks—and those in Pews,
If they—won't like our Play—then they may chuse
For being a rising Man—I only crave,
The Smiles of those who there—[*Pointing upwards*]
[Preferment have:]

Who knowing when to Laugh, most loudly roar'd,
When my fat Commons crown'd the Oaken Board.
And shew'd an eager Appetite—to Wit,

Altho' they were not ask'd to eat a Bit.

That—was unmannerly in me, I guess,

To eat alone, and not impart a Mess,

Jews, Turks and Infidels could do no less.

But it was Pigmeat—and might give Disgust,

To some of *Aaron's* Sons among you thrust,

Who would not taste a Bit, but wish me curs'd.

Pork—is a Christian Test—then none refuse,

To join in Confort—but the faithless *Jews*.

Claps bis Hands.

E R R A T A.

Page 10. l. the last but two, read *adjo!*

P. 12. l. 24. dele *by, by, or,*

P. 30. l. the last but three, read *not* instead of *bet.*

P. 37. l. 17, read *it is* owing.

P. 49. l. 2. read *have* for *my*.

———l. 3. read *extorted* from.

P. 72. l. 24. dele the last Word *you*.

P. 86. l. 20, read *advised* him.